United Nations

A/49/PV.27

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

27th Meeting
Tuesday, 11 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Her Excellency Ms. Lena Hjelm-Wallén.

Ms. Hjelm-Wallén (Sweden): May I at the outset express my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the important post of President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

The loss of the ferry *Estonia* in the Baltic Sea, where more than 900 people perished, brought disaster close to our shores. The shock still lingers in the hearts and minds of all people around the Baltic. I am certain that this tragic event will in the end bring the stricken peoples even closer together. Let me convey our sincere gratitude for the sympathy and condolences that have been expressed in this Assembly.

Sweden's commitment to the United Nations and its principles and ideals is longstanding, firm and deep. To the new Swedish Government this commitment is crucial. The fiftieth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations is approaching. It is perhaps the most important political document in the hands of humanity today. Its strength and potential are immense and must be brought to fruition.

In the spirit of the Charter, world leaders should mobilize a global civic spirit of solidarity to extend the scope of and respect for international law and to strengthen global governance. The United Nations gives us an international system of law to avoid anarchy and the rule of the strongest. The United Nations enables us to work together to thwart ruthless assertion of self-interest and spheres of influence.

Sweden wants a United Nations which reacts effectively against atrocities and mitigates human suffering and through which we can tackle the major questions of global survival, together and in solidarity. Sweden wants a United Nations that not only is a forum for the interests of States but that places the well-being of the individual at the centre. Solidarity does not recognize borders. Let me quote from the statement of the President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, in this Assembly a week ago:

> "The millions across our globe who stand expectant at the gates of hope look to this Organization to bring them peace, to bring them life, to bring them a life worth living." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 14th meeting, p. 10)*

These expectations and hopes are threatened by war and violence, by the suppression of human rights, and by racism and xenophobia. They are threatened by starvation, poverty, disasters and environmental degradation. Peace and security, democracy, human

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

rights and sustainable economic and social development constitute a cohesive entity. If we neglect any of these values, we endanger the others.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are here among us in this Assembly as democratic and sovereign countries from which Russian troops have at long last been withdrawn. Diplomatic breakthroughs in the Middle East offer hopes for a comprehensive and lasting peace. In El Salvador the United Nations has made a significant contribution to ending the civil war. In South Africa, the apartheid has been dismantled.

Yet we are confronted with new conflicts and dangers. We must all learn from tragic events such as those in Rwanda and Somalia. The inconceivable suffering in Rwanda points to the need for preventive diplomacy, early action and the coordination of United Nations efforts. In Somalia, the break-up of organized society and the ensuing large-scale violence and starvation underline the need for the careful coordination of peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building endeavours.

While taking a forceful attitude to gain respect, the United Nations should avoid military enforcement other than as a very last resort and with a clear Security Council mandate.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, efforts to end the conflict must be intensified and accepted by all parties. Pressure on Bosnian Serbs has to be further increased. Only in peace can the tragic consequences of "ethnic cleansing" be reversed. Now is the time to work out plans for reconstruction and reconciliation.

The Swedish Government is concerned about information on Iraqi military activity close to the border with Kuwait. We fully support the statement on the situation made by the Security Council three days ago.

In facing the challenges of the post-cold-war international system, Member States must give their full support to the United Nations, but they must also actively promote necessary reforms of the Organization. The Commission on Global Governance, headed by the Swedish Prime Minister and by Mr. Ramphal, will present proposals for reform early next year.

Let me mention a few areas where, in my view, reform is urgently needed.

The United Nations must be able to operate more efficiently and according to modern principles of management, and new priorities have to be set.

We need an enlarged and more effective Security Council, one that is both legitimate and representative. There is a need for increased transparency in the work of the Council. Countries in all regions must feel that they are partners in its actions. The Council has to maintain political control over the actions it authorizes. It must not become an instrument for dividing the world into spheres of interest, one in which the collective nature of United Nations action is not sufficiently safeguarded.

Sweden has drawn experience from its participation in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Substantive consultations between troop contributors, the Secretariat and Security Council members on a formal and regular basis are necessary.

There must be a particular focus on early warning and early action in conflict resolution. Preventive diplomacy should be further strengthened. Thousands of lives can be saved and costly relief efforts avoided if action is taken in time.

The new Swedish Government is ready to establish a United Nations peace-keeping brigade. We do this in response to the Secretary-General's proposal for stand-by forces set up by Member States, ready to be deployed in crisis areas without delay.

The need for better and more uniform training of peace-keepers is urgent. Particular attention should be paid to improved coordination between the military aspects of peace-keeping and civilian and humanitarian efforts. With this in mind, Sweden is prepared to contribute to improved training of peace-keepers.

Sweden would like to see closer interaction between humanitarian programmes and peace-keeping operations. There is great potential for humanitarian action as a tool of preventive diplomacy, as well as for promoting a political climate that can facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes at an early stage.

The reluctance of Member States to pay their dues in full and on time is frustrating and must cease immediately. When this lack of discipline affects the financing of peace-keeping operations, it puts an additional burden on the troop contributors.

Sweden welcomes measures by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to coordinate the activities of humanitarian agencies and many non-governmental organizations.

Human rights is another area of priority for the Swedish Government. Fortunately, there is a growing and widening awareness among Member States of the role of human rights and democracy for the development of modern societies. Binding norms protecting human rights exist, yet violations continue. This is unacceptable. Governments must show the will and commitment to fully implement human rights norms.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was a great achievement. It is indeed a great challenge to assure all children of care, protection, education and freedom from hunger and from physical or mental violence, as provided for in the Convention and reaffirmed at the World Summit for Children. Governments which have ratified the Convention must live up to their commitments to the children of the world.

Solidarity is fundamental in our efforts to overcome global economic and social challenges, and, thus, fundamental to prospects for peace and solidarity. The United Nations has a unique and central role in this endeavour.

Sweden's development cooperation will focus on support for the long-term, sustainable development of poor countries, with special emphasis on democracy, popular participation and the rights of women and children.

Sweden will continue to allocate a substantial amount of its assistance to operational activities in the United Nations. We will also continue our efforts to strengthen the United Nations function as a forum for normative discussion and action and as a channel for development cooperation. The quality and effectiveness of United Nations activities in the economic and social field have to be improved, while at the same a stable and predictable flow of resources is secured.

Priorities and the allocation of responsibilities within the international community need to be discussed further. "An Agenda for Development" (A/48/935) is a key instrument in this endeavour. We must use it to draw up a clear and strategic programme of action for the United Nations system in the development area.

The International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing are all linked. They contribute to the achievement of human security in a broader sense.

The Cairo Conference established that questions of population and development must be treated together. The starting-point must be the human being and the rights and security of the individual.

Agenda 21, adopted at the Rio Conference, facilitates joint action to achieve sustainable development at both the local and the global level. All over Sweden local versions of Agenda 21 are now being actively pursued.

It is imperative to stop wasting resources and thereby depriving future generations of their means of livelihood. Patterns of consumption and production must be sustainable. In this regard, the developed countries have a particular responsibility. Ecological balance must be established also while we combat poverty.

Disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are central to the goals of preventing conflicts, promoting peace and fostering economic and social development. In recent years important progress has been made. Agreements that were inconceivable only a few years ago have been concluded. But signatures are not enough. Agreements must also be ratified and implemented if they are to contribute to peace and security.

Furthermore, the present momentum should be used to strengthen and further develop well-established disarmament regimes. The need to establish a verification system for the Convention on biological weapons is a case in point.

The non-proliferation Treaty is a key to both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Treaty is the only multilateral agreement in which nuclear-weapon States have committed themselves to nuclear disarmament. As long as nuclear weapons exist, we must insist that these commitments be honoured. It is not least with this in mind that the extension of the Treaty should be pursued. Our common goal must be a world free of nuclear arms.

On several occasions, Sweden has presented proposals for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We are gratified that all States, including the nuclear-weapon States, are now prepared to negotiate such a treaty. It is essential that these negotiations be concluded in the very near future.

Sweden was one of the first countries to ratify the chemical weapons Convention. So far, almost 160 States have signed the Convention, but only 16 have ratified it. We urge all States to take the necessary steps for ratification, so that the Convention can enter into force without delay.

Some 100 million land-mines all over the world represent both an acute and an impending humanitarian disaster as well as a threat to economic development, even years and decades after hostilities have ceased. The long-term solution is an international agreement to ban anti-personnel land-mines. Sweden has proposed such a ban.

Regional instruments for preventing and dealing with conflicts are being developed. This should not deprive the regions involved of support from the international community through the United Nations. The responsibility of the United Nations, including the Security Council, remains universal.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is a central and indispensable institution for conflict prevention and management. The endeavours of the CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities have effectively contributed to building security in Europe, as have the CSCE missions in the field.

The Swedish experience of cooperation between the CSCE and the United Nations tells us that global and regional efforts are not in contradiction but are mutually reinforcing.

Sweden's non-participation in military alliances remains unchanged. This policy contributes to the maintenance of stability in the north of Europe, and improves our possibilities of working for common security in Europe and in the world at large.
Sweden will actively contribute to the new security partnership in Europe by responding rapidly to requests from the United Nations, and by contributing substantially to activities of the Council of Europe, the CSCE and the Partnership for Peace arrangement. We want to strengthen cooperation with all our neighbours around the Baltic Sea and in the Barents Sea region. We look forward to cooperation in all areas with the new, democratic Russia.

Sweden has applied for membership in the European Union. In one month the people of Sweden will decide on this important question in a referendum. As a member of the Union, Sweden would whole-heartedly support the Union's efforts to promote security and economic and social development, not only in Europe but on a global scale. It is by looking outwards, by forging links and extending its cooperation to other regions, that the European Union makes its contribution to global stability and solidarity. Let me emphasize that there is no contradiction between European and global cooperation. Sweden will be an active member of the United Nations and defend openness and international cooperation.

Sweden has presented its candidature for a seat on the Security Council for the period 1997 to 1998. The Swedish candidature is based on our commitment to global security, on our will to promote international law, and on our conviction that conflicts can and must be solved by addressing their root causes before they lead to war.

Sweden's support for the United Nations is a fundamental national interest and a cornerstone in our foreign policy, for reasons of peace, freedom, security, democracy and justice. For these reasons, Sweden will strongly promote the United Nations — a United Nations based on democratic principles, giving us all a voice in our common future.

Address by Mr. Ntsu Mokhehle, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Mr. Ntsu Mokhehle, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, His Excellency the Right Honourable Mr. Ntsu Mokhehle, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Mokhehle (Lesotho): On behalf of the people and Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, and on my own behalf, I have the pleasure to extend to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-ninth session. Your election is a fitting tribute to the efforts that your country has made and continues to make in international relations, especially its mediatory role in conflict situations on our continent. Our special thanks also go to your predecessor, the Ambassador of the Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, whose abilities and clear vision in steering the Assembly during the forty-eighth session will forever be remembered with appreciation.

We are also indebted to our distinguished Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whose track record is without parallel.

My delegation is proud to welcome the Republic of South Africa, now free and democratic, back into the international fold. The resumption of the right of South Africa, a founding Member of the United Nations, to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations, is very timely, coming as it does as we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

Even as we approach the threshold of the twenty-first century, our world is still mired in conflicts. Our Organization must strive to contain these and other situations, which are the legacy of the post-cold-war era. We are entering a new era, one in which democratic and inclusive global institutions can play a principal role in building a better world. It is still difficult, however, to have a clear vision of the future role of the United Nations in the new international political order that is emerging following the end of the cold war.

As it approaches its fiftieth anniversary, the United Nations faces a number of challenges; it has to become a real instrument of international legality, peace and security. The Organization needs to have the means and the flexibility to play an increasingly active role in these unpredictable times. Unfortunately, however, the United Nations of today still reflects the structure of the world of 1945 as seen by the victors of the Second World War. United Nations organs such as the Security Council need to be revitalized and democratized so that they may become more representative of the regions encompassed in this Organization.

The General Assembly, as one of the principal organs of the United Nations, an organ that is universal in character and one in which Member States enjoy sovereign equality, needs revitalization as part of the current process of the transformation and reform of the United Nations system. The United Nations system should be able, at all times, to respond rapidly to changes and new developments as they occur around the world. In the last few years we have witnessed significant events of historic moment. We had not anticipated that the Iron Curtain would be dismantled so quickly; nor could we have foreseen the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the eradication of apartheid in South Africa. The United Nations may not possess the clairvoyance to predict events before they occur, but it should have the capacity to respond to developments and crises rapidly and effectively as they arise. The events in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, recently, in Rwanda starkly demonstrate the sluggishness of the decision-making process and the lack of responsiveness on the part of the system.

Disarmament, especially in the nuclear field, remains an urgent concern of this Organization. Its relationship to international peace and security is today more evident than ever before. We are mindful of the fact that in recent years, at the height of the cold war, the world experienced a period of uncertain peace, a peace that was sustained more by the fear of a nuclear holocaust than by the existence of harmonious relationships among nations, especially the opposing nuclear blocs, or by progress towards complete and general disarmament. Today, conditions exist for the establishment of a stable and peaceful global environment. It is under such conditions that the world can begin to enjoy what may be called the peace dividend, whereby global expenditures will be shifted away from preparations for war and unending concern for national security towards investment in development.

Solid groundwork for cooperation and confidence-building has been successfully laid in a number of regions. The progress in this regard bodes well for the future. In our region, the continental organization, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has established a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The apparent inability of the world community to act in a timely and decisive manner during some tragic conflict situations in our continent has taught Africa the cardinal lesson that we cannot continue to delegate our responsibilities to the rest of the world. We have seen evidence of this a number of times, particularly during crisis situations in Rwanda and Somalia. Africa is taking up more seriously the challenge of fending for itself. We shall, however, continue to count on international solidarity and cooperation during the trial stages of the mechanism.

In Liberia, the OAU, in conjunction with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations, continues to seek a solution to the conflict on the basis of the implementation of the Cotonou Peace Agreement. We are happy with the progress achieved thus far in Mozambique. The situation in Angola, however, continues to be of grave concern to us.

We urge the parties involved to show political will and to negotiate in good faith in order to ensure the early establishment of lasting peace, stability and development.

The complementarity between democracy and the observance of human rights on the one hand, and development on the other, can no longer be a subject of debate. Democracy is the cornerstone of every civil society and the preservation and sustaining of its institutions should be binding on all of us. The expression by the international community of the will to cooperate in this endeavour has been clear in recent times. If it is necessary to look backward to yesterday, it is only to draw lessons that will enable us to march confidently and resolutely into the future, a future in which our citizens will live in harmony and enjoy prosperity.

The attainment of democracy, peace and development as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the charters of the Organization of African Unity and other organizations has become the responsibility of all nations. Where these principles are threatened by those who are reluctant to come to terms with the realities of today, the international community has stood up resolutely in defence of our fledgling democracies. This attitude augurs well for the new world order we seek to establish.

The events in Haiti and our recent experience in Lesotho demonstrate beyond the shadow of a doubt that young and fledgling democracies can be seriously threatened or turned off their course. In the early morning of 17 August this year, the people of Lesotho woke up to hear an announcement over Radio Lesotho that shocked and bewildered them. According to that announcement, certain clauses of the Constitution of Lesotho had been suspended, and as a result of that illegal and arbitrary act the democratically-elected parliament and Government of Lesotho had, it was said, been dissolved. The constitutional crisis we faced has since been resolved; however, I recall these events because of the important lesson they brought home to all of us who were directly concerned.

First, it became abundantly clear that the support for democracy among our people cuts straight across party political lines. Secondly, the international community can no longer countenance an open attack upon democratic principles and the institutions of democratic governance. The people of Lesotho rose up in large numbers to demonstrate their displeasure and their abhorrence of the disguised coup against their elected Government. Despite the repressive measures taken by those who had brazenly intruded upon the constitutional order of our country, the people sent a clear signal that the powers of a tyrant are forever circumscribed by the will and the determination of the people to resist oppression and by their desire to be governed only with their own consent.

I take this opportunity to thank the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the commonwealth of nations for supporting my Government and my people in their struggle to maintain legality, constitutionality and democratic rule in Lesotho. I need to mention specifically the timely and principled intervention by President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa and President Ketumile Masire of Botswana. It is through their mediatory efforts that we were able to emerge from the unfortunate constitutional crisis that we experienced.

The people of Lesotho will always remember that when they faced a critical test, when the foundations of their young democracy were under attack and threatened with wanton destruction, the friends of democracy stood firm and remained resolute to the end. The member States of the European Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) never wavered in their support for democracy in Lesotho. The Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden took a stand and immediately suspended all economic assistance to Lesotho, thus sending a clear signal to the usurpers of power that what is really here to stay is democracy, and nothing else.

We in Lesotho believe that the observance of human rights would go a long way towards eliminating hotbeds of tension and civil strife. In almost every country experiencing some kind of civil strife, it will always be found that the first casualty of that strife is human rights

It is in this context that, recently, Lesotho ratified quite a number of international human rights instruments. At the regional level, we all support the work of SADC, which has recently decided to establish a sector to deal with human rights questions. We pledge to work with our fellow SADC member States as we develop this new sector of our organization. We also pledge to fulfil our obligations at the international level through the various United Nations bodies engaged in human rights work.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Ntsu Mokhehle, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe, His Excellency Mr. Nathan Shamuyarira.

Mr. Shamuyarira (Zimbabwe): My delegation congratulates you personally, Sir, as well as your country, Côte d'Ivoire, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your election is testimony to the role you and your country have played in international relations. We are confident that the United Nations will benefit from the term of your presidency. Allow me also to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, on his outstanding stewardship of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. His conduct of the many complex and vital issues before that session was indeed praiseworthy.

Our tribute also goes to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his sterling leadership of our Organization during the past year, a year in which it has continued to face ever-increasing challenges. We are especially grateful to him for his continued efforts to further the objectives of the United Nations in Africa and elsewhere, and for his tireless drive to enhance the Organization's role in maintaining international peace and security and addressing development issues.

My delegation would like, at the outset, to welcome the delegation of South Africa in our midst. Its readmission into the community of nations signifies victory in its long and difficult struggle for justice and equality. For the African continent, it marks the closing chapter in the total decolonization of the continent; and for the United Nations, it concludes an extraordinary collective struggle against the policy of apartheid.

In this context, I must add that the recent decision by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency to redesignate South Africa as Africa's representative on the Agency's board was indeed appropriate and welcome.

However, in welcoming South Africa back to our international Organization, we should also heed the words of President Nelson Mandela - uttered from this rostrum only a week ago - that his country needs massive financial and material aid to cope with the problem of the millions of poor and unemployed people in his country.

While the triumph of democratic forces in South Africa is cause for celebration, the tragic situation in Angola continues to be a source of major concern to my delegation. We are gravely concerned at the continued conflict in that country. If the peace accord negotiated in Lusaka is not signed by the end of October, the Security Council should immediately impose economic sanctions on UNITA, as agreed in resolution 864 (1993). We cannot continue delaying and postponing action while waiting for a peace that does not come. However, if the peace accord is signed, the United Nations, for its part, should stand ready to deploy a greatly increased peace-keeping force to supervise the cease-fire.

In Mozambique, despite delays in the implementation of the General Peace Agreement, we are hopeful that peace and stability will soon be realized. The forthcoming national elections, planned for 27 and 28 October, should produce results acceptable to all Mozambicans so that they can live in peace and harmony. The international community and the United Nations should continue to provide the material assistance that is needed to realize that peace in Mozambique.

Members are aware of the crisis situation that had been developing in the Kingdom of Lesotho since the beginning of the year, which culminated in the attempted unseating of the democratically elected Government. We have just heard a statement by the Prime Minister of Lesotho himself, Mr. Mokhehle, describing to us the events that took place in his country. Consistent with the Organization of African Unity mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) charged Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe with undertaking a regional initiative to resolve the crisis in Lesotho.

Mr. Blandino Canto (Dominican Republic), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We are happy to report that this joint mediation has resulted in the restoration of constitutionality and constitutional Government in that country. Prime Minister Mokhehle has adequately described that situation, and I need add nothing more.

In Rwanda, the horrendous acts of genocide we have witnessed will surely haunt every one of us for a long time to come, both those among us who had the means to act but did not do so and the many who, while desiring to help, lacked the means. We call for the strengthening of the United Nations presence under the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), as an essential confidence-building measure to provide the displaced people of Rwanda with tangible assurances that they can safely return to their homes. A few days ago we heard a statement by the President of Rwanda, Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, inviting an increase in the size of UNAMIR in order to achieve precisely what we are asking for: confidence-building.

In both Rwanda and Burundi, the tensions are still too close to the surface for anyone's comfort. In Somalia, the deterioration of the security situation and the resurgence of inter-clan fighting, banditry and lawlessness are still a source of great concern to my delegation. The people of Somalia should take full advantage of United Nations peace-keeping efforts and of the OAU mediation effort led by President Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, and forge a political settlement based on sharing the power among the Somali nation as a whole. Zimbabwe has contributed two battalions to peace-keeping in Somalia. As we start gradually withdrawing those battalions, we hope they will not be called back to a Somalia where law and order have broken down again.

We are glad that the Identification Commission of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), has begun its work, and we urge both parties speedily to resolve any outstanding impediments to the holding of the referendum in that country - and we know from debates in this Hall that there have been many impediments. The quest for self-determination in Western Sahara has taken too long, and has remained on our international agenda for a long time. It should therefore not be delayed any further.

My delegation also welcomes the recent major developments in the Middle East peace process which have brought the people of Palestine closer to their inalienable right to self-determination. While we fully support that peace process, we believe that it should proceed on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1975), and that the international community should continue to monitor developments in that region closely so as to generate and maintain the momentum for change. The people of Palestine still need and deserve our continued support until they reach the goal of nationhood in a Palestinian State with its capital in Jerusalem.

We from the African region are particularly mindful of the inextricable link between peace, security and stability on the one hand and socio-economic development on the other. There can be no economic development without peace and stability. Central to these fundamental concerns about peace and stability are the basic issues of protecting human rights and democratic governance. We believe that high priority must be given to these issues in our national policies. Consequently, dictatorial and non-democratic regimes should be shunned and isolated by all of us and by the international community at large, as well as by regional organizations. The curtailment of people's participation in decision-making processes undermines the capacity of countries to provide all their people with even the basic necessities of life including food, water and shelter and basic social services such as education and health.

Zimbabwe believes that international efforts to promote peace, stability and security where these do not exist or are threatened can largely be facilitated through regional organizations and good neighbours. We in Africa have taken concrete measures in this regard by establishing a permanent mechanism of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. It is in keeping with the spirit of regional arrangements that the countries belonging to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) joined hands in addressing the situation in Liberia - work that still continues - and that we in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) took the initiative in Lesotho to which I have already referred. In our view, such arrangements could also be devised to address situations elsewhere in our continent, for example in Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia. What we are urging is the involvement of regional organizations, subregional organizations and neighbourly countries in conflict resolution and conflict management, because they know the problems and they know the issues.

For such regional arrangements to become sustainable it is essential that other regional organizations and the United Nations extend a helping hand by providing financial and other material assistance. For indeed, what are initially regarded as internal or local conflicts have the potential, if left unattended, to grow into trouble spots threatening international peace and security itself.

This is an auspicious time for the family of nations to further the goal and achieve the objective that the founding fathers of our Organization had foremost in their minds: - that of disarmament. In this context, my delegation is of the view that the extension and review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) scheduled to be held in March 1995 is a unique opportunity for practical steps to be taken to ensure the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Clearly, the treaty itself is discriminatory and the nuclear-weapon States have not fully implemented their obligations under article VI of the Treaty. Several speakers today have referred to the inadequacies of the Treaty. We will not support any indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT in its present form. The nuclear-weapon States must undertake to reduce and eliminate their nuclear arsenals within an established and binding timetable. As a demonstration of their good faith they must also stop impeding the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Only then will a nuclear non-proliferation regime be meaningful.

Last year the Non-Aligned Movement submitted a draft resolution asking the Assembly to request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. This was in pursuance of a long-standing position of the Non-Aligned Movement favouring complete disarmament. Regrettably, that draft resolution was not brought to the vote. We are, however, glad that the Non-Aligned Movement has this year decided to submit the draft resolution once more, and to press it to the vote in the Assembly. This initiative is deserving of the strongest support of all members. In recent years nuclear disarmament has become a bilateral issue; yet the international community has a right to play a central role in ensuring that the nuclear threat, which affects all mankind, is removed forever. If the Assembly were to request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice, nuclear disarmament would be brought back into the multilateral forum where it belongs, so critical issues related to nuclear proliferation and nuclear controls could be discussed openly and commented upon in the General Assembly. It would also be consistent with the Secretary-General's recommendation on resort to International Court of Justice advisory opinions in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" and would give impetus to the process of nuclear disarmament, which has begun to flag in the post-cold-war era. The Non-Aligned Movement is to be congratulated for having taken this initiative this year; we hope it will gain the support of the Assembly.

We all agree that there have been so many changes on the international scene that the present Charter and methods of operation of the United Nations should be revised to meet the challenges and aspirations of a new and changing world order.

In this regard, my delegation has already put forward some very specific proposals, which I will not recapitulate in any detail here. Those proposals are now part of the African common position paper which refers to the powers of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the relationship of those bodies to the Bretton Woods institutions and to the specialized agencies. This subject has been referred to by a number of speakers from this rostrum; indeed, the speakers from Africa have repeated the African common position.

It is quite clear that the present arrangement, where Africa and the Latin American region are not represented at all amongst the veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council, should not be allowed to continue. The underrepresentation of these two regions is both undemocratic and unfair, and I hope that the matter will be addressed at the appropriate time in terms of the African common position.

Furthermore, any exercise in the revitalization of the United Nations should envisage coordination of the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions to which I have already referred.

We are pleased that world-wide socio-economic problems of equitable utilization and distribution of resources are going to be fully addressed at the Far Social Development World Summit in Copenhagen next year. Several important conferences have recently been held within the framework of the United Nations: the Rio Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in Cairo. We are now looking forward to the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen next year, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to take place in Beijing later next year.

These conferences all address matters that are vital to the South and/or to the third-world countries as a whole, and we hope that the social development Summit will focus on growing poverty in the world and how to attack it. The rapid development of science and technology is taking place in the middle of increasing poverty and disease amongst large population groups, especially in the third world. It is time we took enormous steps to eradicate world poverty and to create full employment. We hope that the combined efforts of the environment and population Conferences, to which I have already referred, and the social development Summit and the Beijing Conference will mobilize the international community for a final and sustained attack on world poverty.

Zimbabwe believes that at the national level it is imperative that development put people first by promoting social development through employment-creation opportunities and other poverty- eradication programmes. In our view, the provision of adequate food, water and shelter as well as such basic social services as education, training and health is an absolute imperative. In the promotion of opportunities for increased popular participation, the enhancement of the role and status of women requires paramount attention. Employmentcreation requires greater private initiative and increased investment. Thus domestic policies have to be pursued with the aim of creating a favourable environment for investment.

The critical economic situation in Africa - the least developed and most marginalized of all the regions of the world - has to be addressed if global economic growth and interdependence are to have any meaning at all. With 90 per cent of all poverty stricken people in developing countries, the eradication of poverty remains a major concern at both the national and the international levels. Yet neither the economic reform measures which we are carrying out nor our efforts to alleviate and eradicate poverty can be expected to succeed without the provision of adequate financial resources on a predictable, assured and continuous basis, and we appeal to those countries that have surplus resources to increase their support and aid to the developing countries.

For most developing countries the issue of resource flows cannot be dissociated from that of the external debt problem, a problem that has also been addressed in many statements to the Assembly. Figures available clearly indicate that the overall debt of the developing countries is still on the increase - from some $800 billion in 1982 to $1.4 trillion in 1992 - and it continues to rise. Combined with the interest rates, the figures are constantly growing, indeed becoming staggering. We believe that new, comprehensive and coordinated approaches to the debt and debt- servicing problems have to be adopted, including outright cancellation or at least the application of the measures proposed under the Trinidad terms for low-income developing countries.

Zimbabwe believes that the expansion of international trade is essential to economic growth and is indeed an integral part of development. We therefore consider the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations to be an important achievement which deserves to be welcomed by developing and developed countries alike. We also welcome the landmark agreement to create the new World Trade Organization, which we hope will reinforce the multilateral trading system. We welcome the meetings that have been arranged both in Africa and elsewhere to study the impact of the Uruguay Round agreement and the World Trade Organization on our economies.

We reiterate the hope that these developments will improve the access of developing countries' exports to markets in developed countries, and that the new conditionalities or new forms of protectionism under the guise of social or environmental clauses will be avoided. Particular attention has also to be paid to the critical need for the diversification of the African economies. In that regard, we once again reiterate the need for the international community to support our proposal for the creation of a diversification facility for the development of the African commodity sector.

Finally we would urge the big Powers - and especially the United States - to adopt a policy of dialogue rather than confrontation in resolving disputes with smaller Powers around the globe. In particular, we would urge full-scale discussion and dialogue with Cuba aimed at normalizing relations with a small neighbouring country in the American region, dialogue with Libya in order to get a fair and just trial for those suspected of causing the Lockerbie air disaster, and the continuation of the meetings with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in order to resolve the issues related to nuclear-weapons development and, hopefully, pave the way for the reunification or North and South Korea.

With the end of the cold war, global peace - so much coveted - is now within our reach. A concerted effort by regional organizations and the international community can get us to the promised land of international peace. We should try and try again, but the attainment of peace is not the task of international organizations alone: it is also the task of national Governments and national leaders.

In this context we would like to appeal to the leaders in the Gulf to pursue the path of peace that has been charted for them by the United Nations in several resolutions, and to assure them that any attempt at occupying other countries in the Gulf, such as the one we witnessed in 1991, will not be accepted by the Assembly or by the international community as a whole.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on Mr. Carlos Morales Troncoso, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Morales-Troncoso (Dominican Republic) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the Dominican Republic and its Constitutional President, Mr. Joaquin Balaguer, I offer to the President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, Mr. Amara Essy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, our congratulations on his well-deserved election.

Likewise, our delegation pays a tribute of gratitude to Ambassador Samuel Insanally, for his stewardship of the work of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, and, especially, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has dedicated all his time and effort to ensuring full observance of the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

My Government's policy towards the pressing need for development is exemplified by the urgent efforts it is making on behalf of its people in the changing context of today's world.

Forty-nine years ago, when the United Nations system was created following the end of a second major world-wide conflagration, the idea and hope prevailed of bringing about a new world order that would exorcize the spectre of war and, once and for all, do away with war's attendant human degradation and hatred.

However, the victorious emergence of two ideologically opposed Powers led to the creation of a bipolar international system that gave birth to the so-called cold war, marked by lateral confrontation and an arms race which, because of the ever-present possibility of direct confrontation, could have led to a nuclear holocaust and the annihilation of mankind.

Thus it was that the General Assembly became the stage *par excellence* for the airing and debate of the most urgent world-wide problems. While its political effectiveness may not have met all the requirements of peace because of the structure of world power that had prevailed since 1945, it did achieve overwhelming success in the actions and programmes of its specialized agencies.

Born to foster peace and security and to promote development, the United Nations was the fruit of the post-Second-World-War era. At that time peace meant the absence of war and of the justifiable fear of world-wide self-destruction.

The hope for a renewed international order based on new values has gained momentum. Unique and monumental events symbolized by the razing of the "wall of infamy" have created the propitious conditions and opportunities for recapturing and relaunching the lofty goals of the signers of the San Francisco Charter.

Those events summon us to struggle for a world built on solidarity, respect for the self-determination of peoples, and the quest for a better standard of living for all.

A new world and its agonizing challenges require new answers and clear and unambiguous objectives combined with an iron will to achieve them. The human being must be at the centre of all concerns. Our efforts must thus be aimed at combating poverty and achieving social justice. We must foster new democratic ways for the exercise of power and genuine respect for human rights. In other words, we must ensure that democracy works, prospers and prevails.

Unquestionably, the present-day world is beset by economic and political complexities incompatible with the aspirations of people everywhere to a decent life.

Globalization of the economy, intense financial competition, national cultural diversity, and the various tensions between groups, countries and regions, typified by the ethnic and religious regional conflicts of recent years, constitute the features of the new reality.

The answers to these challenges and problems are no longer to be found in the use of arms. They lie in the will to build a consensus and in the ability to promote development through fair competition regulated by rules that are accepted by all participants.

Unless world peace is at stake, the threat or use of force is no longer a viable instrument for achieving the decent life to which all peoples are entitled.

How, then, can we defend democracy and ensure that, rather than perish, it becomes stronger and more effective in dealing with starvation, unemployment, drug trafficking, the depletion of natural resources, forced migration and the new forms of trade protectionism that undermine development?

If, indeed, we are to protect human rights and strengthen democracy, we must undertake a thorough review of this whole issue and of the very concept of development on the basis of equitable access to markets, capital and new technologies.

The Dominican Republic is one of the most solid and deeply rooted democracies on the American continent. It is one of the few Latin American democracies in modern times with a record of lasting and commendable political stability. It is an example of harmonious and civilized coexistence in a society marked by contrasts. We have shown to the world that our democracy is participatory, with reconciliation and dialogue as the channels for the solution of the major political and economic crises that we have experienced.

In the economic arena, global interdependence poses challenges, and yet offers opportunities. We must therefore make progress in harmonizing financial, technological and production policies in order to achieve growth at all levels.

The development of the most industrialized nations may be inadequate without the growth of developing nations. The greatest growth in outlets for the commodities of industrialized countries will be found in the markets of developing countries.

We are witnessing a transition towards trade liberalization that can lead to freer trade and the eradication of poverty through the creation of more and better jobs.

However, certain threats appear on the horizon. One of them is neoprotectionism. Even though the "barbed-wire" hostility of former protectionist tariffs is being dismantled, the re-emerging protectionism may not be based on tariffs, but it conceals certain invisible, yet genuine enemies: environmental regulations, customs barriers, quotas, anti-"dumping" rules, social clauses and others. In this way the aspirations to free trade may become mere rhetoric.

Impoverishment is another threat. Are we fully aware that opening up our economies can cause us to overlook the need to properly administer their attendant social costs?

Unemployment and the acceleration of social investment plans threaten to negate the efforts we have made over many years to democratize our political systems. While the formation of economic blocs is an established fact, it gives us pause nevertheless: To what extent might this phenomenon constitute a stumbling block for a world based on the democratic rules of free trade and on equal conditions for all?

As members know, more emphasis is placed on selling than on producing. However, we do not have adequate means of production or fair access to them; yet we are supposed to compete on an equal basis with the more industrialized countries of the world. These are not invalid complaints and claims. New rules must be worked out to permit developing countries to gain access to technology and finance their infrastructures on favourable terms - in other words, to attain practical and acceptable levels of competitiveness.

How can we meet these new challenges? To begin with, any development policy must attempt to modernize our sources of production. If we have little or nothing to sell, what is the point of continuing to open up our markets? This is closely linked to the development of a proper transport and communication infrastructure and to the optimum use of energy sources.

We must thus create new conditions of productivity, particularly in the fields of technology social development. If human beings are to be the focus of all development policy, the fostering of effective programmes becomes the best possible business. An investment in health, education and housing is profitable not only socially but economically.

All these initiatives and actions to meet the new challenges that stem from the globalization of the economy must be viewed in that context. Therefore we need a new kind of cooperation, which must be the keynote of international activities. Among other things, we must adjust national policies to global objectives. We should be able to achieve a new idea of cooperation. Cooperation is the alternative to intervention, the way to fulfil the international community's desires for peace, stability and democracy.

In this new age, we must be keenly aware of the trends that are shaping the end of this century and the beginning of the next. The world is becoming smaller, more interdependent and globalized; the survival of human life is gravely threatened by the deterioration of the environment and by short-sighted, uncoordinated policies to stem the tide of problems besetting the planet.

We in the Dominican Republic, have our share of problems, but one stands out: we live geographically next door to the poorest nation of the hemisphere. Haiti has written glorious pages in the history of the struggle for freedom and equality. Its past, heavy with confrontation and long periods of authoritarian rule, has unfortunately turned it into a nation requiring international assistance. There must therefore be a determined and generous show of cooperation on the part of the international community so that the Haitian people may pursue its destiny - economic and social, as well as political. The Dominican Republic has always been ready to cooperate in effective initiatives for the betterment and viability of needy countries, whose peoples have every right to live in dignity, with all the opportunities offered to others.

The problem of drug trafficking and narcotics consumption continues to be a scourge of world-wide dimensions. It is the Dominican Republic's State policy to deal most severely, in keeping with our legal provisions, with the trafficking, consumption and possession of narcotic drugs. What is more, our country has offered, and will continue to offer, its cooperation to other nations in the apprehension, prosecution or extradition of those who have made this criminal trade the most lucrative activity of our new times.

Although the developed countries are the most attractive market for the sale of narcotic drugs, the underdeveloped countries, whether or not they are producers of narcotic drugs, have seen an increase in drug addiction too. The entire international community must continue resolutely to deal with this scourge so that drug abuse does not become the side effect of a seductively excessive well-being or the amnesia-inducing product that helps some to cope with poverty.

The Dominican Republic, a nation of pacifist traditions, will continue to support the efforts of the United Nations in preventing armed conflicts and in the establishment, maintenance and consolidation of international peace and the internal peace of all nations.

In another field of endeavour, the Dominican Republic retains the concern voiced at last year's session of the Assembly on the proposal made by the Secretary-General to merge the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). INSTRAW was conceived at the first World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in Mexico City, and was created pursuant to the decision of the Economic and Social Council.

The Dominican Republic takes this occasion to reiterate its request that INSTRAW and UNIFEM not be merged. We also request retention of the commitments entered into under Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/LX, of 12 May 1976, which establishes the permanent headquarters of INSTRAW in the Dominican Republic, so that our great city in the Americas may continue to host that important organ.

We are deluding ourselves if we think that peace, security and development can be pursued as separate goals at either the national level or the international level. The new order and new balance that are coming into being call for new ways of thinking and new priorities. They require a reappraisal of current international realities in the light of established norms with regard to the sovereignty of all nations and recognition of the pluralism of the world's peoples.

The new era demands that confrontation turn into dialogue and that calls for justice be replaced by shared commitments of peoples.

The promising, peaceful future of which we all speak in meetings and assemblies will come about if, above all, we, the Governments of our region, do our bit, without haggling or imposing conditions, according to our material and leadership potential.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I now call upon His Excellency Mr. Bolong L. Sonko, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia.

Mr. Sonko (Gambia): My delegation welcomes the election of Ambassador Amara Essy as President of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly with a genuine feeling of great pride and satisfaction; he is not only our neighbour in the West African subregion, but a seasoned diplomat. He is certainly no stranger here, having served his great country, Côte d'Ivoire, as Permanent Representative at the United Nations for many years. We in the Gambia hold him in high esteem for his constructive and positive contributions to problems of common concern, both at the bilateral and multilateral levels. I have no doubt that those qualities, for which he is well known, will contribute immensely to the successful conclusion of our deliberations. I should therefore like to congratulate him warmly on his assumption of office and to assure him of the full support of my delegation in carrying out his important mandate.

Let me also take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ambassador Insanally for the excellent manner in which he performed his duties during his tenure of office last year.

In the same vein, I wish to commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his untiring efforts and effective leadership in ensuring the realization of the ideals for which our Organization, the United Nations, was founded.

My delegation joins many previous speakers in wholeheartedly welcoming South Africa to the Assembly after a 20- year absence. The advent of a non-racial, democratic Government in South Africa symbolized a significant turning point in the constitutional and colonial history of South Africa, in particular, and of Africa in general. The resilience and resourcefulness that have guided and inspired the people of South Africa in the crucial years of their march to a non-racial and democratic Government will, I have no doubt, serve as important assets in South Africa's effective participation in the work of the United Nations.

On 22 July this year there was a peaceful removal of Government in the Gambia, when it was replaced by the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council under the chairmanship of His Excellency Lieutenant Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh. This change was caused by a series of events and developments within the country that the previous Government had neglected and in some cases had refused to address. The continued abuse and misuse of political power and of public office, coupled with serious corrupt practices at various levels of Government departments, necessitated this action.

Mr. Ngendahayo (Burundi), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Gambia has since independence in 1965 enjoyed a relatively long period as a democratic State and as a politically stable country. We acknowledge this achievement, but at the same time we also have good reasons why the Government in power had to be removed.

In the evolution of nation States a stable political system is essential in any country for peace, security, stability and development. When that stability comes under increasing strain, however, and is threatened from within by certain important officials of Government and politicians alike, the preservation of that stability and national integrity becomes more important than anything else.

There is no political system that is perfect. We take the view that when a democratic political system is under attack by some unscrupulous individuals holding public office through corrupt practices and other selfish acts, in open violation of the moral tenets of honesty, commitment, discipline and hard work, it becomes necessary to institute corrective measures to stop and prevent that system's decay and instability.

The privilege of being the people's representatives does not confer any rights that entitle those representatives to do anything other than the people's business. The restoration of public trust and confidence in government in the older democracies is an institutionalized process that has acquired value and stability. The mechanisms that protect the State and allow for a peaceful and acceptable mode of restoration of public trust and confidence have been tested and proved effective over time.

That action is reinforced by the fact that the strength of democratic societies lies with the people, who freely participate in the political process and select or elect their representatives. The legitimacy of government derives, therefore, from the expressed will of the people to have a government that will promote and protect their rights as well as the collective interest of society.

In the newer democracies, however, where there are no mechanisms or institutions that can protect and preserve the essence of the democratic process, there has been a tendency, in response to a moral imperative, to take radical measures that are intended to arrest the abuse of political power and the misuse of executive authority in the interest of society as a whole.

We wish to emphasize that the events that took place in the Gambia in July this year must be understood as politically necessary to allow for corrective measures to be put in place and to usher in a new and equitable democratic political system. In this connection, the present provisional Government's overriding objective is to set up those institutions that would provide the necessary checks and balances and thus enhance the democratic process in the Gambia and the right of the people to elect a government of their choice.

The essence of a democratic political system is, in addition to its inclusive character, its ability to promote the political, economic, civil, social and cultural rights of the individual and of the community as a whole. Any unbalanced approach to the promotion of those rights renders the system less democratic, less responsive and thus more suspect.

Any democratically elected Government that only promotes the civil and political rights of its people and neglects the promotion of their social, cultural and economic rights, or that deliberately fails to provide equal opportunities for all its people, forfeits, in our view, its right to govern. The challenge that faces democratic Governments - and any Government, for that matter - is how to promote that cluster of human rights without giving any undue attention to a few of them. In other words, the promotion and protection of human rights requires a balanced approach as opposed to an unbalanced one.

His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally - the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session - in his address to those who participated in the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, which was held in Managua, Nicaragua, in July, said:

> "To survive and flourish, democracy must be provided with an infrastructure of institutions which are conducive to the culture of a free society. Each citizen must be guaranteed, in addition to his or her fundamental human rights, opportunity for economic and social development. ... Basic rights such as education, health and housing must be provided by the State to guarantee a stable society in which democratic norms and practices can prevail."

The Gambia subscribes fully to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other human-rights instruments. We shall continue to respect our obligations under these international covenants. In this regard, we shall also continue to give full support to the Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights of the Organization of African Unity and the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, which are based in Banjul.

To those who, in these times of new and emergent democracies in Africa and elsewhere, may argue that the Gambia had a genuine democratic system we wish to restate that democracy as practised in our country had certain fundamental weaknesses, which failed to allow change to emerge from within the democratic process. We affirm our commitment to returning the country to civilian rule after addressing these inherent weaknesses.

The peaceful manner in which the people of the Gambia responded to the change of Government encourages the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council to move towards a timetable that would return the country to civilian rule before long.

A programme of transition and rectification will shortly be announced. This will give details of the activities to be undertaken within a time-bound framework. As part of the programme, and in an effort to institutionalize transparency and accountability in our society, the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council is setting up four commissions of inquiry designed to shed light on the past practices of some public servants and former politicians suspected of corruption and the embezzlement of public funds.

The Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council has made it abundantly clear that much as we are determined to recover funds stolen from public coffers, there will be no witch-hunt. In pursuit of these objectives, we are mindful of the need for objectivity and impartiality. No military tribunals will be set up. All the suspects will be tried in civilian courts by civilian judges.

In this connection, the new regime has already approached a number of friendly countries in our subregion that have the same legal heritage as the Gambia and asked them to assist by providing judges with the requisite expertise in similar exercises. In this way the objectivity, impartiality and independence of the judiciary will be further guaranteed.

At the same time, a Constitutional Review Commission is being established to look into certain aspects of the Constitution with a view to making it more functional in terms of advancing the cause of democracy. As part of this process, an independent electoral commission will also be put in place for the same purpose - to strengthen democracy.

The military take-over was not, therefore, directed against any country; its purpose was to redress certain internal difficulties. As soon as that task has been completed the country will be returned to civilian rule. It is our intention to ensure that the democratic system that will be put in place in the Gambia will champion, in word and in deed, the balanced promotion and protection of all human rights and respect for those rights on the part of all those who hold public office. We look forward to the understanding and support of the international community at this critical phase of the transition process.

It goes without saying that while we are engaged in this national exercise we shall also honour all our international obligations, in addition to playing an active role in the comity of nations. I therefore take this opportunity to renew my country's unswerving commitment to the ideals and principles of the United Nations.

We have followed with interest the numerous events that have taken place around the world since the last session of the General Assembly.

The situation in Liberia has always been of major concern to us, and the failure to implement the Cotonou Accord fully has not dampened our enthusiasm. The Akosombo Agreement constitutes another attempt, in a long and tortuous peace process, to galvanize the principal players in the Liberian conflict in an effort to achieve a genuine peace leading to free and fair elections. It is the fervent hope of my delegation that the continued efforts and sacrifices being made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other African friends of Liberia, and indeed by the United Nations in the shape of the continued presence of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), will encourage the warring factions to agree to disarm without further delay.

The Gambia has followed with keen interest recent positive political and military developments in Rwanda leading to the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a Government of national reconciliation, which we hope will be consolidated further. The assistance of the international community will continue to be needed in Rwanda, not only to restore peace and stability and law and order but also to ensure the smooth, safe and speedy return of all Rwandese refugees and displaced persons to their respective homes.

We continue to observe with concern the failure of the peace process in Somalia. The current inability of the international community to broker a durable peace and reconciliation between the parties to the conflict should not deter us; rather, it should spur us to redouble our efforts and our resolve to find a satisfactory solution to the conflict.

We understand and appreciate the international community's frustration at the failure of the warring factions to work towards reconciliation and reconstruction. But peace is priceless and constitutes one of the principles underlying the creation of this noble Organization, and this is certainly not the time for the United Nations to consider withdrawing the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNISOM).

It is with equal concern that my delegation views the situation in other trouble spots around the globe - notably, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is saddening to note that, so far, all the efforts deployed by the international community to find a negotiated settlement have been persistently frustrated by the Bosnian Serbs without the slightest compunction. Furthermore, the Bosnian Serbs have persisted with their heinous policy of "ethnic cleansing" and other war crimes, in total disregard of the basic norms of international behaviour.

At the General Assembly's last session my delegation expressed the firm view that the defenceless Muslim population should be given the opportunity to defend itself in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which makes provision for the exercise of the right of self-defence. I believe that by lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina the international community would be sending strong and clear signals to the intransigent Bosnian Serbs.

With regard to the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, my delegation upholds the view that the Simla Agreement and the relevant Security Council resolutions provide a sound basis for a just and lasting solution to the conflict.

With regard to the situation between Kuwait and Iraq, my delegation would like to reiterate that the key to a durable solution lies in compliance by Iraq with all the United Nations resolutions on the issue - in particular, those dealing with recognition of and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait. However, recent Iraqi military action does not augur well for a speedy lifting of United Nations sanctions and the achievement of stability in the region.

In respect of the Arab-Israeli conflict, we are encouraged by the events that have been unfolding since the signing of the Peace Accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The balance sheet has been generally positive, and we encourage both sides to pursue the peace process.

At this juncture I should like to congratulate Jordan and Israel on the courageous and constructive step they took recently to end the state of war between them. Such a positive development will give added credibility to the entire Middle East peace process to secure a comprehensive and durable solution in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Another important and worrying factor, which threatens to undermine any political gains in our countries, is the question of poverty and the lack of economic development. Extensive external debt and debt-servicing obligations continue to be important constraints on the advancement of the developing countries. The situation is most acute in Africa.

The external debt of Africa as a whole has been growing by about 2.5 per cent yearly and for sub-Saharan Africa the annual debt growth rate has been estimated to be as high as 7.7 per cent. This is equivalent to $199 billion, while debt-servicing arrears total some $45.8 billion, which is equivalent to over 20 per cent of the total debt stock. For sub-Saharan Africa, therefore, the ratios of debt to gross national product and debt to export are almost three times the registered average for all developing countries, making it the most impoverished region in the world. There is more than ever before an urgent need for the international community to find a lasting solution to this problem.

Against the background of such difficulties, it is regrettable to note that, in real terms, aid flows to Africa as a whole have also been on the decline in spite of the substantial increase by a few countries in their levels of aid to Africa. Equally noteworthy is the failure of direct foreign investments to increase appreciatively enough to relieve Africa's financial crisis and stimulate economic growth.

Let me, *en passant*, recall that the Tokyo International Conference on African Development served as a forum to raise international public awareness and renew commitment to Africa's development. The successful implementation of the Tokyo Declaration will depend largely on the common political will of African Governments and their development partners.

From a global perspective, it is predicted that the conclusion of the Uruguay Round will link economies more strongly through an increased flow of trade and finance based on trade liberalization and a strengthening of the multilateral trading system. While the liberalization of trade as a result of the Uruguay Round may lead to a substantial increase in world trade and income, the impact on developing countries could be less noticeable. Many African countries may find themselves among the least to benefit, partly as a result of the removal of certain preferential trade arrangements.

On a different but more positive note, it is gratifying to note that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, has completed its mandate and that a Convention has been adopted. The three regional implementation Annexes have also been concluded. The cumulative effects of drought and desertification on our environment as well as on the socio-economic development of our countries have been amply demonstrated. But if this Convention is to make a difference, it must be provided with the necessary resources to ensure its effective implementation.

The correlation between drought and desertification and rapid population growth is well known. That is why we welcomed the International Conference on Population and Development that has just ended in Cairo. It demonstrated the importance of population policy as an essential ingredient of social and economic development. We fully support the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference and will continue to work closely with international, regional and national agencies, including non-governmental organizations, to implement it, taking into account our national priority strategies on population policy. Similarly, the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action which issued from the World Conference on

Natural Disaster Reduction constitute a clear reflection of our collective determination to develop and strengthen our existing capacity for natural disaster prevention, reduction, preparedness and mitigation.

We very much welcome the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen in March 1995. While the Conference will address three core issues - enhancing social integration; alleviating and reducing poverty; and expanding productive employment - it will none the less attract a number of social and developmental issues of relevance to world social progress and global development. For those of us in the developing world, the Conference will afford the opportunity to address once more our socio-economic development needs while drawing attention to existing social ills in our societies and finding solutions to these problems.

In the same vein, the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing will give us the opportunity to evaluate the advancement of women in light of the objectives of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the year 2000. It will also provide fresh guidelines to ensure that the targets set are achieved. Indeed, the twenty-first century holds many challenges for mankind, but the most important and pressing will be the elimination of gender discrimination.

It is now clear that the resolve to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples is gaining ground, and that, in the process, the United Nations provides the most appropriate forum. In order to fulfil this purpose efficiently, the ongoing consultations for restructuring and revitalizing the United Nations system, notably that of the General Assembly, should be vigorously pursued. My delegation will continue to lend its unwavering support to these laudable efforts. The creation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services confirms once more the importance of the effective management of the Organization's limited resources. Urgent attention should also be given to strengthening cooperation and coordination between agencies of the United Nations system, the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Finally, I should like to reaffirm my Government's commitment to the work of the United Nations and the preservation of international peace and security. Gambia will continue to give full support to the international effort to address the social, economic and environmental problems facing mankind. The joy we share with other nations as Members of the United Nations is matched only by our respect for each Member of this commonwealth of nations.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Comoros, His Excellency Mr. Said Mohamed Sagaf.

Mr. Sagaf (Comoros) *(interpretation from French):* At the outset, I should like, on behalf of the delegation of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, to extend to Mr. Essy my warmest congratulations on his election to the presidency of our Assembly. I am convinced that his wealth of experience in international relations will be for us the best guarantee for the success of our work. Through him, the Assembly has also paid resounding tribute to his country, Côte d'Ivoire, and to one of its illustrious departed sons, the late President Houphouët-Boigny, a great statesman and acknowledged visionary whose wisdom and intelligence made a great contribution to the advent of a world of peace and progress.

I wish to join previous speakers in expressing profound gratitude to his predecessor for the effectiveness with which he presided over the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

I also take this opportunity to convey to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our Secretary-General, our high esteem and fraternal gratitude for his tireless efforts to reduce pockets of tension and strengthen international peace and security. His devotion and talent reinforce the role of our Organization.

These past five years, the world has seen great upheavals that have put an end to the cold war and ideological blocs. Despite the emergence of certain conflicts, the world is on the threshold of a new, more promising era in which dialogue and joint action seem to be prevailing over confrontation.

We are one year away from the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, and in the present circumstances we must think about defining the new missions our Organization has to carry out, in addition to those bestowed on us by history. Even if the goal of a peaceful world society has not yet been reached, it is acknowledged that our Organization has contributed broadly to decolonization and the progressive development of international law. Of the positive results achieved by the United Nations, the definition and promotion of human rights is inarguably the most important. This world forum has made it possible for developing States to make the international community more aware of their difficulties and to express their demands. Thanks to the United Nations, some global problems, such as those of population and environment, have become priority concerns for all nations, small or large, rich or poor.

The climate of *détente* and the easing of tensions in international relations undoubtedly made it possible to resolve the conflict that beset South Africa for so long. The first non-racial, democratic elections held in South Africa, resulting in the election of President Nelson Mandela, are the best evidence of the positive development of law there. My country is particularly pleased to see the Republic of South Africa occupying its seat in our great family. All Africa places its hopes in South Africa, whose leaders have demonstrated wisdom and determination. We earnestly hope South Africa will be able to pass peacefully and harmoniously through its new stage of transition.

One of this year's felicitous events is clearly the concretization of the peace process that started with the Washington agreements between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Their mutual recognition has provided fresh impetus, and it heralds an era of peace in that part of the world, which has for so long been bloodied by war. I take this opportunity to congratulate President Arafat and the Palestinian people on their tireless efforts to give Palestine a sovereign, independent State within internationally recognized boundaries.

If peace is to be established in the Middle East, there must be a comprehensive settlement of the differences between the State of Israel and the Arab States of the region. The Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, an Arabic-speaking and French-speaking African State, will spare no effort in sincerely encouraging all the parties concerned to strive for peace. We therefore welcome the agreement reached between the Kingdom of Jordan and Israel.

My country has always respected our Organization's principles, and therefore has always advocated dialogue and concertation in the settlement of conflicts. In that spirit, it endorsed the General Assembly's recommendations on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte. Need I recall that in this regrettable dispute, which started 19 years ago, [between the Comoros and France], in 1975, the Comorian authorities have always expressed a willingness to negotiate with France on the legal and practical modalities for the return of the Comorian island of Mayotte to its natural community. Unfortunately, France has always opposed concertation on this issue. Quite the contrary: that great country, an unchallenged defender of human rights, is prolonging its administrative and military presence in Mayotte. It has also undertaken in this part of our small territory reforms and socio-economic development plans whose clear aim is to separate for all time the four sister islands that geography, history, race, religion, language and economy had joined together with ties that were both identical and complementary. For Comorians, faith and dignity have made this problem a cardinal point of our sovereign existence.

While we take note of the tangible results of the rebirth of democracy in Eastern Europe, the opening up of Africa to multiparty politics and the easing of tensions between Powers, we cannot be but concerned at the appearance of conflicts that are undermining world stability and equilibrium. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a constant and striking reminder that we still have a long, long way to go on the road to lasting peace. My country calls on the Serb and Bosnian parties to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions and to accept the plan for territorial division proposed by the Contact Group. Nothing would be more tragic than allowing passion and pride to prevail over reason and take precedence over the lives of thousands of women, children and old people, who are the daily victims of this incomprehensible conflict.

We are equally at a loss when we look at the genocide that has ravaged Rwanda. We still wonder how all the macabre events that have torn Rwanda apart could have taken place. Fortunately, peace has been restored and normalization seems to be gaining ground. I take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to France for "Operation Turquoise," as well as to all the States that supported that operation, for without it Rwanda would have ceased to exist. We express our gratitude to the neighboring States for the very African hospitality they showed in saving the lives of human beings in distress. I urgently appeal to the new Government of Rwanda to spare no effort to bring about national unity, without which the reconstruction of Rwanda cannot be assured.

In addition, we salute the courage and determination of the political authorities and the people of Burundi for their avoidance of another tragedy with incalculable consequences.

The international community must assist Africa - particularly the Organization of African Unity, which has never remained indifferent to the various conflicts that have embroiled certain Member States - to prevent conflicts and manage them better. It is imperative that we finally wake up to Africa's economic realities and understand that its instability and destitution are a standing threat to society throughout the world.

While we recognize that the world political situation has eased considerably, we must also take note that the international economic situation shows us no glimmer of hope. Political stability will be fragile if there is not a clear improvement in the economic sphere and, in particular, if growth is limited to the wealthy countries. The developing countries are bearing the full brunt of the ill effects of the crisis, in the form of deteriorating terms of trade, rising protectionism, decreasing net flows of external resources and, on top of all that, the debt burden, which nullifies the efforts of the developing countries.

The widening gap between wealthy and poor countries reduces the effects of the economic recovery in the industrialized countries in recent years has seemed to be clearly appearing on the horizon. In this context, it is our collective responsibility to combat poverty, famine and destitution in the developing countries.

Given the distress of the developing countries and an international economic system in crisis, we must devise a new and constructive vision, one capable of restructuring the world economy while reflecting the interests of both parties within the framework of sincere cooperation.

We place our hopes in a renewed United Nations that will take concrete action to establish more balanced international economic relations.

In the opinion of my country, the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, cooperation between North and South is vital to the balance of the world economy. The Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros also believes that cooperation between the countries of the South is imperative; indeed, we have made cooperation with the developing countries an essential element in our relations.

For us, the development of South-South cooperation is a bounden duty in order to insure the continuation and strengthening of development assistance. We have chosen a policy of regional solidary and integration as an effective tool for economic and social progress. Our commitment to the Indian Ocean Commission, and our membership in the African Economic Community, as well as our participation in the preferential trade area, ZEP, demonstrate the importance the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros attaches to the General Assembly's recommendations on the need for the developing countries to cooperate on a regional level in order to better confront their own problems. It is in this spirit that our regional institutions have adopted a strategy aimed, first and foremost, at strengthening trade and industrial cooperation, and at improving transportation, telecommunications and so forth.

Since the democratic election of His Excellency Mr. Sáíd Mohamed Djohar to the Supreme Magistrature, the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros has committed itself to working for a democratic, dynamic and open society and to combating corruption, in order to definitively bring about economic and financial recovery. In this effort, the Comorian people adopted a new constitution and, last December, democratically elected a new Parliament composed of all the country's main political parties.

The Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros understands that international cooperation alone cannot eradicate the evils of underdevelopment. Thus it has signed a programme of structural adjustment with the international financial institutions, with the aim of achieving economic recovery and of improving public finance. It is a trial that the Comorian people is enduring with courage and sacrifice. But the recent devaluation of the Comorian franc has exacerbated the crisis by seriously undermining the Comorians' purchasing power. In such a difficult socio-economic context, how can one convince starving people and demoralized State workers that democracy brings hope? The measures taken as a result of the structural adjustment programmes do not facilitate the role the public authorities of a country must play in the context of social renewal.

While it is true that the easing of international political tension and of certain regional conflicts has reinforced hopes for peace, the gravity of the international economic situation is also creating doubt.

The victims of the world crisis are still the same: men, women and children of the African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean regions.

Indeed, the same people are always the ones who are confronted with famine, poverty, natural catastrophes and desertification. Other modern scourges such as fundamentalism, terrorism, epidemics and drug-trafficking have been added to an already hostile socio-economic environment. The harsh reality of the poor countries is accentuated by their exclusion from the decision-making process concerning the international economic situation. As the twentieth century draws to a close, the long-cherished hopes of the third-world peoples are giving way to disappointment.

The special session of the General Assembly on economic cooperation, the Paris Conference on the least developed countries, the five years of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and many other programmes and projects that have been drawn up and carried out over the last 20 years have not attained the goals set for them by the General Assembly in the area of development. Specialists in development assistance and economic cooperation are unanimous in finding that the current trend is towards stagnation and even regression.

Our General Assembly must now find a solution to the problem created by the failure of international economic relations.

We must insist more strongly on our sense of solidarity and shared responsibility.

My country has always advocated strengthening the role of the United Nations in all areas of international relations. But it also believes that the structures of the United Nations system must correspond to the new world scene. We are among those who believe that the victors of the Second World War do not have a monopoly on the maintenance of peace and on the socio-economic development of nations.

The General Assembly must be the central body where the relevant decisions of our Organization are taken.

It is difficult to understand why there is no connection between the political determination expressed here by States, the essential components of the protagonists of international life, and the international financial institutions.

On behalf of His Excellency Mr. Sáíd Mohamed Djohar, President of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, and on behalf of the Government and the people of the Comoros, I should like from this rostrum to make a solemn appeal to the international community to provide effective support to the Comorian people in its efforts at socio-economic recovery and in its irreversible commitment to democracy.

I should like to request that the Security Council reconsider the sanctions adopted against Libya, because, as a result of sanctions condemning inadmissible acts, an entire people is being penalized. It is in this spirit that the relevant resolutions adopted by the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity should be taken into consideration, so that this fraternal country may enjoy its sovereignty.

We welcome the imminent return of President Aristide to Haiti. May the peace-keeping operation there bring stability and security so that Haitians, in their renewed unity, can work together to rebuild a free and prosperous nation.

We also extend these wishes to our brothers in Liberia, Somalia and Angola, so that, as in Mozambique, they may resume dialogue and lay down their weapons.

We also wish to encourage the Algerian authorities in their efforts at national reconciliation in the greater interest of the Algerian nation.

According to several sources, it seems that there has been a significant movement of Iraqi troops towards the Kuwaiti border. We venture to hope that these manoeuvers are intended for a purpose other than aggression against Kuwait. Indeed, our Organization will never accept a repetition of Iraq's aggression of 1990.

It is difficult for us to believe that Iraq has not learned the lessons of that famous, much-covered Gulf war, from which the Iraqi people, the ultimate victims, are still healing their wounds.

The aggression against a sovereign State and the attack on its territorial integrity are a clear violation of international law. It is an act that goes against the fundamental principles of the Charter of this Organization.

That is why, on behalf of the Government and people of the Comoros and in the name of the sacred principles of Islam, I appeal to the Government and people of Iraq to halt any attempt to invade Kuwait. It is up to the Security Council to use all peaceful means to spare us a second Persian Gulf war. If it does not, mankind will not be able to understand why each time peace seems to be established another war looms.

May I conclude by repeating my delegation's fraternal congratulations to the President of the General Assembly on his election. We are at his complete disposal to assist him in any way in his discharge of that lofty, noble mission.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Marshall Islands, His Excellency Mr. Phillip Muller, on whom I now call.

Mr. Muller (Marshall Islands): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his unanimous election. It is indeed a great honour for his country. I can assure him of my delegation's willingness to assist him in his duties.

Let me also congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana on the exemplary manner in which he carried out his duties. His innovative use of expert hearings on the question of development were followed closely by the Marshall Islands delegation.

My compliments are also extended to our distinguished Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whom we thank for his tireless efforts on behalf of this Organization.

On a more sombre note, I wish to extend the condolences of my Government, delegation and people to our neighbours in the Pacific, Papua New Guinea and Japan, which have both recently experienced devastating volcanic eruptions. Our prayers go out to the peoples of both countries in the hope that they will be able to make a speedy recovery.

Further grim descriptions and graphic pictures of the terrible loss of life on the high seas in the sinking of the "Estonia" have been occupying the air waves and television screen. We should like to express our deepest sympathy and condolences to the affected families and Governments over this tragic accident.

We now wish to join other delegations in welcoming South Africa to this Organization. The struggle of its people with racial inequality resulting from apartheid was long and difficult, often resulting in the loss of precious lives. We share their excitement in finally joining the concert of nations.

We also wish to congratulate our neighbour the Republic of Palau on attaining its independence on 1 October this year.

The aftermath of the cold war has made it necessary for the United Nations to take on many challenges. The Organization itself has become involved in several ambitious undertakings in innovative international relations and multilateral actions. We hope that these new endeavours of partnership will produce lasting solutions to many of our global problems.

That very partnership is evident by the work being undertaken on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is viewed with great interest in the Marshall Islands. Currently, we are working together with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), of which we are a founding member, in introducing a new protocol to the Convention. We commend the Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States for her coordinating work in the International Negotiating Committee. In addition, we welcome the urgent call made by the German Foreign Minister for more immediate reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. The German Government's support for the AOSIS protocol is most gratifying. We hope that the Conference of the Parties will adopt the proposed protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction next year in Berlin.

As an island nation, the Republic of the Marshall Islands regarded the adoption by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, earlier this year, of the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as historic and of great importance. We view this Agreement as a positive step in bringing order to the exploitation of marine resources. In this vein I am happy to announce that we will sign that Agreement at this session. We are also happy to note the imminent entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, in November this year.

In the months leading up to the Barbados Conference last April, we were very confident that at last the international community would try to do something positive for the small island developing States, a group of countries that we feel has been neglected. We are pleased that we now have a Programme of Action, and we will do our utmost to seek its successful implementation to enhance our island economic development.

As a country with one of the highest population growth rates in the world, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has followed with great interest the International Conference on Population and Development. It was a shame that this process was nearly derailed by semantic disagreements. Fortunately, the Conference, in Cairo, after arduous and intensive negotiations, saw fit to adopt an expanded international population strategy, as a result of which we now have a well-thought-out Plan of Action. It is of concern to us that so much of the cost involved in the implementation of the Plan of Action will be borne by individual countries. We will, however, make every effort to maximize our participation in this Plan of Action.

The United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks recently completed its third round of discussions here in New York. We all owe a great deal to its distinguished Chairman for his masterful stewardship. For the Marshall Islands, this Conference is particularly important as we seek to build our capacity to utilize our marine resources responsibly. Unlike distant-water fishing nations, our geographical location compels us to ensure the sustainable exploitation of our fisheries resources for future generations, whether within or outside our exclusive economic zone. This is a matter of survival, one that transcends economics.

I submit, however, that large-scale commercial fisheries are a new concept for our people. That being so, we are interested in modern methodologies for the commercial exploitation of fisheries resources. We must familiarize ourselves with them. In this regard, the active assistance of the developed countries is needed to train our people in the modern techniques of commercial fishing. In this context, it is essential that we gain preferential access to international markets. We have brought this matter up many times, and we urge the Assembly to promote trade as well as training. While we are not asking for much, we do hope that assistance for self-help will continue to be forthcoming.

The development of human resources is probably the most important factor in improving the economic situation in the Marshall Islands. We are grateful to New Zealand and to the current Chairman of the South Pacific Forum - Australia - for their efforts in this field. We encourage others to follow their example. Thus, together with other Forum countries, we will aspire to develop a strategy that will prepare the way for the World Summit for Social Development.

We recognize that further improvement of our relationships with the various United Nations agencies in our region is essential. Furthermore, because of their increased responsibilities and workloads, we would encourage an increase in the number of representatives of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme in the region, and we would also support an increase in their funding.

I also wish to associate myself with my colleagues from the region regarding the application by the South Pacific Forum for observer status at the United Nations. I urge the General Assembly to seriously consider this request, as it would be of great value to our region inasmuch as it would strengthen our ties to the United Nations.

Of equal importance is the World Conference on Women in Beijing next year. As a matrilineal society, we have long recognized the wisdom of including women in our decision-making process, and we look forward to participating in the Beijing Conference.

During the World Hearings on Development earlier this year, many of the expert witnesses spoke of the high proportion of United Nations expenditures earmarked for peace-keeping, much to the detriment of overall development efforts. This is a matter of ongoing concern to the Marshall Islands as well as to several other small countries. We feel that the sheer number and cost of these operations are getting out of hand. The preservation of global peace is of the utmost importance, but in relative terms the costs that fall on smaller developing States is very large. The Marshall Islands will actively participate in this matter in the Fifth Committee, and we hope to work together with others for a more equitable apportionment of expenses and assessed contributions. We are fully supportive of the views put forward by the President of Latvia regarding the concept of the "capacity to pay".

The people of the Marshall Islands regard with abhorrence the numerous human rights abuses that are occurring around the world. We shall be very vigilant in the discussions following on the Vienna Declaration on this matter. We believe there is no statute of limitations to human rights abuses, as clearly they are crimes against humanity. The prevalent lack of common decency, which the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina so painfully described in his recent address, must be eradicated.

We note that His Excellency President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation stated that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should also commemorate the victims of the Second World War. My delegation fully supports this concept, particularly since the fate of many Pacific Island people during the Second World War remains an unwritten chapter in the history books. For example, the atrocities carried out against the people of Mili Atoll in the Marshall Islands have not been fully addressed. We trust that moral restitution will be made to the memory of these victims.

The President returned to the Chair.

The consequences of recent geo-political events have amply demonstrated the need for the expansion of the Security Council. With 184 Members, the United Nations must ensure that the Security Council reflects the realities of the changed situation. My delegation supports the proposal for increased membership. Moreover, there is an acute need for increased transparency in the work of the Council. In this context, it is appalling to note that the Security Council, whose decisions affect all Members, does not involve more States in its decision-making process. As a positive remedial solution, the suggestion by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of New Zealand in this regard is of great significance and should be considered.

I should like to remind the members of the General Assembly of the continued presence in the Marshall Islands of dangerous residual radioactive contaminants from United States nuclear- weapons-testing programmes. Members will no doubt recall that it was during the relatively brief period of the United Nations-approved trusteeship that 67 atomic bombs were detonated on islands that had been inhabited peacefully and productively by the people of the Marshall Islands for centuries. This must be regarded as a matter of more than historical interest, in view of the resulting legacy of horrific environmental degradation and tragic human suffering - a legacy that threatens to haunt the Marshallese people for centuries to come.

Documents recently declassified and released confirm that the full extent of the radioactive contamination resulting from these tests was not disclosed to the Marshall Islands by the United States during the negotiation of the Compact of Free Association. Accordingly, neither the compensation provided nor the remedial measures undertaken or contemplated for the clean-up of some of the contaminated islands and the treatment of the affected human population can now be regarded as adequate.

My Government lacks the huge sums required to ensure the proper clean-up and disposal of the radioactive contaminants and the treatment of the radiation-induced illnesses and birth defects caused by the nuclear-weapons tests. Notably, the containment facility that was established for the radioactive materials gathered from some contaminated areas is wholly unsatisfactory by any reasonable environmental standard.

What, then, is my Government to do? We may hope for the unreserved cooperation of the former administering Power in fully cleaning up and disposing of its nuclear waste and in adequately aiding our afflicted people. However, as a country that every day continues to suffer the consequences of the failure by that Power to meet its obligations, we must look to such alternatives as we may find. In short, we must do more than simply hope.

It is with this unhappy dilemma in mind that we ask the General Assembly to consider sympathetically our efforts to attend to the restoration of our lands and the treatment of our people. The clean-up and disposal of nuclear contamination in the Marshall Islands will require very large sums of money indeed. The effective disposal of those contaminants will require their permanent isolation from the human biosphere. An international facility on a remote, uninhabited atoll of the Marshall Islands for the safe, permanent disposal of nuclear materials would, if technically feasible and politically acceptable, meet these requirements. My Government wishes it to be understood that such a facility would also serve the global interest in securing the safe and permanent disposal of a portion of the world's dangerous nuclear materials, an interest that, at present, is by no means accommodated anywhere in the world. Consequently, my Government has resolved to conduct a preliminary feasibility study for such a facility and to consult closely with interested members of the international community as we proceed.

In this regard, I wish to commend the remarks made by the Foreign Minister of Norway in calling on the International Atomic Energy Agency to convene an international conference on the management of nuclear wastes. We look forward with interest to such a conference, and we pledge our support.

My Government recognizes that the establishment of a nuclear materials disposal facility in the Marshall Islands may upon detailed analysis be found to be unfeasible or otherwise unacceptable. In that event, my Government will look to the Members of this Organization for their support in the effort to secure the complete removal from the Marshall Islands of all residual radioactive contaminants and of the existing storage facility. We expect that the party responsible for the radioactive contamination of the Marshall Islands will provide the funds and the technical means required to effect this removal promptly and completely, as well as to ensure the restoration of all the affected islands to their full economic viability. We expect that this Organization, which placed our islands under trusteeship in the first place, will ensure that justice prevails.

At this time, my Government requests the sympathetic support of the General Assembly as we continue with the effort to secure a commitment to adequate treatment and full compensation of all the victims of the nuclear-weapons-testing programme. My Government attaches the utmost importance and immediate urgency to this matter.

The issues I have mentioned are of high priority. It is my sincere hope that when we gather together next year, our efforts will indeed have yielded concrete results, visible and meaningful to our peoples. To accept anything less would be a disappointment.

Mr. Seydou (Niger) *(interpretation from French)*: Your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, Sir, is a source of pride for the whole diplomatic community, for Africa and for your country, Côte d'Ivoire, and constitutes a just reward for your dynamic guidance of your country's diplomatic activities. Those of us who already know your work at the United Nations and at other international meetings can already foresee the success of the work of the forty-ninth session; we know your enormous talent, wisdom and patience. Your election also reflects the international community's confidence in your country, Côte d'Ivoire, a country with which Niger maintains diversified relations solidly rooted in the history and geography of West Africa.

Finally, your election is a posthumous tribute by the international community to the work carried out over half a century by the late President Félix Houphouët-Boigny in the service of human dignity, peace and social progress. Permit me, therefore, to congratulate you, Sir, and through you the people of Côte d'Ivoire and its President, Mr. Henri Konan Bedié, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

I wish also to congratulate the other Assembly officers; I am sure they will spare no effort to rendering valuable assistance as you carry out your tasks.

Niger thanks your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, for his tireless work; he fulfilled his mandate methodically and ably during one of the Organization's busiest years.

I also convey my greetings to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and thank him for the dynamism and far-sightedness with which he is carrying out his mandate in this period of important change; we hail him for his firm commitment to international peace and security.

The annual convening of the General Assembly gives Niger the opportunity to renew its faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, signed at San Francisco nearly half a century ago. On 28 September 1993, the President of the Republic of the Niger, His Excellency Mr. Mahamane Ousmane, here outlined the views of Niger and its people on the problems of our time. In his statement he stressed that the solution to some of those problems lies first and foremost in the establishment of democracy. Indeed, it is through democracy that mankind will find the path of freedom, the path of the love of work and the path of the shared happiness of citizens.

Niger is firmly committed to this path of democracy; it has already found the path of freedom for its children. Today in Niger, no one is molested because of his philosophical or religious ideas; since the establishment of the Third Republic, freedom of the press is complete and is guaranteed by the Constitution. Freedom of association too is complete and guaranteed by the Constitution, and a number of political parties, associations and trade unions now play to the full the role that is properly theirs in every democratic society.

It is in that context that the people of Niger is engaged in rediscovering the path of the love of work, which alone can generate wealth. Many non-governmental organizations have been founded and are working in close cooperation with foreign organizations.

The Government of Niger is aware of its responsibilities in this area, and is doing everything it can to ensure that every man and woman of Niger feels fully involved in development issues and can make even a modest contribution to building a society founded on prosperity, justice and freedom.

Niger is a Sahelian country confronted with the inexorable advance of the Sahara Desert; we welcome the conclusion at Paris last June of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa. Niger invites all Member States to sign that important Convention so as to permit it to enter into force as soon as possible. We hope that the international community will finally be able to act on its commitment to give countries suffering from this scourge the ability to lay the foundation for genuine, sustainable development.

Like other developing countries, Niger is facing numerous difficulties, the most important and most formidable core issue for us is rainfall, whose capriciousness is feared by our authorities and our people alike. Sometimes too meager, sometimes excessive, the rainy season is an ongoing concern in Niger. Last year there was not enough rain; this year, however, there were rains such as Niger has not witnessed in more than two decades. They caused considerable damage but did not gratify our people or our Government with an adequate harvest.

Niger wants to free itself from the vagaries of the heavens in order at last to save its children from hunger and thirst. That is why our Head of State, His Excellency Mr. Mahamane Ousmane, has initiated a major campaign in which the people are participating in building the first-ever dam on the Niger river.

To this end he called on all the citizens of Niger to mobilize the resources needed to build the Kandadji Dam.

From this rostrum, I should like to invite all organizations and countries which wish to aid my country, to give particular attention to this project. For Niger, this is a question of ensuring the conditions necessary for the survival of the present and future generations.

My country has accorded food self-sufficiency top priority in its campaign for economic development. It keenly hopes that with the assistance of the international community it will achieve this objective before the end of the present decade. Here, Niger hopes that the nations which share the same ideal of prosperity and happiness will extend it the same solidarity.

Since he took office in April 1993, President Mahamane Ousmane has vowed to devote his full energy to the return of peace in the troubled regions in the north of our country. He has made that question a constant matter of concern for the Government of Niger.

By the grace of God, and following the recent negotiations held in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, the Government of Niger signed a peace agreement with the Coordination of Armed Resistance, thereby opening the way for a cease-fire and the drawing up of legislative texts designed to provide more harmonious management of the regions.

On behalf of the Government of Niger, allow me here to extend our warm gratitude to Algeria, Burkino Faso and France, whose mediation made it possible to arrive at this fortunate conclusion.

The Ouagadougou Agreement, which was signed last Sunday, 9 October 1994, and which entered into force today, 11 October 1994, will allow the people of Niger to devote itself to the critical issues of development in a calm atmosphere. It opens the way to national reconciliation among the sons of the same geographical region, united by history and inspired by the same will - that of living together.

The Government of Niger will, for its part, engage in implementing this Agreement by submitting a draft law to the National Assembly as soon as possible.

It hopes that the international community will assist by providing material and financial resources to ensure the return and integration of the refugees.

Niger is also expecting consistent support from the international community to ensure its economic recovery. Thus, since the devaluation of the CFA franc, my Government has been continuing negotiations with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

It has concluded an agreement with the Bretton Woods institutions on economic recovery, and negotiations are now under way for the conclusion of an agreement on the facility for strengthened structural adjustment. The Government of Niger has taken the necessary preliminary measures to ensure that the present negotiations lead to the signing of this agreement at an early date.

On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, it is gratifying to be able to note all that has been accomplished, in particular over the last few years, in areas as complex as peace-keeping, disarmament, security, the establishment of democracy, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The development of the situation in the Middle East which led to the establishment of the Palestinian authority in Gaza, like the logic of peace and dialogue which now prevails between Israel and the other Arab countries, is part of this new dynamic.

We cannot fail to mention here, with legitimate pride, the process which led to the establishment in South Africa of a democratic regime which is being guided with wisdom and determination by President Nelson Mandela and which has allowed this founding Member of the Organization to regain its rightful place in the community of nations.

How can we fail to be gratified that President Jean-Bertrand Aristide will soon arrive on Haitian soil after three long years in forced exile?

These are indeed major events which encourage us to hope that we will see a rapid return of peace wherever it may have been shattered or wherever it is threatened.

The recent negotiations held in New York between Cuba and the United States, the negotiations between the American and North Korean authorities, as well as the withdrawal of the last foreign troops from Germany and some of the Baltic States, show how much we have accomplished in the five years since the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

Throughout the world - in Africa, in Asia and in America and in Europe - the last vestiges of the cold war are fading away to open the way for a fruitful partnership among nations.

The United Nations has made its contribution to the achievement of this new atmosphere but here and there hotbeds of tension continue to exist which attest to the fragility of the present balance.

Among these conflicts, some of which are ravaging Africa, I would mention first of all the conflict in Rwanda, where a fratricidal war has caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children, left thousands wounded and sent millions of refugees into exile.

How can we have allowed such a tragedy to take place without having used all the means and resources available to the international community in time to prevent, if not limit, the unprecedented massacres which were perpetrated?

Because it is aware that nothing lasting can be conceived and realized in Rwanda without peace and unity among its sons Niger made its modest contribution to the restoration of peace in Rwanda by participating in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR).

In this country which has been torn apart, Niger hopes to see the provisions of the Arusha Agreement enforced so that the hardworking people of Rwanda may be able at last, and once and for all, to turn its attention towards the tasks of reconstruction and development.

Niger expresses the same hopes for peace and stability in neighbouring Burundi and welcomes the significant progress made recently, which has resulted in its acquiring authorities who can pursue the work of consolidating the peace.

Quite close to Rwanda, peace is making great strides also in a country which has been engaged in war and suffering since its independence, namely, Mozambique. Niger keenly hopes that the changes which took place recently in South Africa will have a very positive effect on the elections to be held there on 27 and 28 October.

The situation in Angola is a matter of concern for my delegation. Niger welcomes the fact that, thanks to pressure from the international community and the efforts made by President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa and thanks also to the joint actions of the special representatives of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, UNITA has finally agreed to the signing of a peace agreement, a prelude to a general cease-fire and the establishment of a lasting peace in Angola.

Nor must the international community and, in particular, the United Nations turn its attention away from Somalia, that other fraternal country that has been ravaged. Indeed, it must do all in its power to maintain a significant United Nations presence, which alone can guarantee lasting peace in Somalia.

The process of settling all these conflicts has revealed the need for greater coordination between the efforts of the United Nations and those of the regional organizations within the framework of safeguarding peace and international security.

Niger thanks all the countries which, on a bilateral basis, made their valuable contribution to the resolution of certain African conflicts and appeals to the international community for continuing support for the machinery of prevention - machinery established by the Organization of African Unity for the management and settlement of conflicts - to allow it to be more operational.

My country is gratified that, after 46 years of hostilities, Jordan and Israel agreed to sign a peace agreement on 25 July 1994 - this less than a year after the signing of the agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Niger hopes that the logic of peace which has been established in this region will lead to the signature of similar agreements between Israel and Lebanon on the one hand and between Syria and Israel on the other, so that once and for all fraternity will prevail between the sons of this part of the world, the cradle of centuries-old civilizations.

Niger thus appeals to the Iraqi authorities to ensure that the actions they undertake fit within the spirit and letter of the Security Council resolutions, that they recognize the international borders of Kuwait and refrain from any action likely once again to inflame the Gulf region in a fratricidal conflict with incalculable consequences.

Clearly, the world today has gone from a period of confrontation to one of cooperation.

It is clear that our Organization over the years, with its present membership of 184 States, is aspiring towards the ideal of universalism enshrined in its Charter. However, it is up to the United Nations to devote particular attention to other regions and other peoples which, through their vitality and economic dynamism, could also contribute to the implementation of the ideals of the Charter.

It is moreover in this spirit that Niger regrets that the General Assembly was not able to put on its agenda the item entitled "Consideration of the exceptional situation of the Republic of China in Taiwan in the international context, based on the principle of universality and in accordance with the established model of parallel representation of divided countries at the United Nations".

Niger is keenly concerned at the continuation of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina despite the efforts and the patience of the member countries of the Contact Group and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the many actions undertaken by the international community.

The most recent events in this conflict have demonstrated to those who still had doubts that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is deliberate and is supported by the leaders of the Serbian community who have made force the primary basis for their actions.

That is why, while welcoming the political courage demonstrated throughout this crisis by President Izetbegovic, Niger supports the proposals which he made here on 27 September of lifting the arms embargo which is preventing Bosnia and Herzegovina from exercising its right to legitimate self-defence in accordance with the Charter of the Organization.

At the risk of seeing many States lose their faith in the system of collective security, the Security Council should make the Serbs respect the relevant resolutions which it has adopted. It is high time for the Security Council to take the measures required by the situation concerning the Serbian aggressors.

The end of the cold war and of the East-West conflict has not yet fully liberated mankind from all its anguish; nor has it allowed it to remove the heavy burden posed by the build-up and improvement in arms. While it is true that risks of armed confrontation between the super-Powers have today disappeared allowing unimaginable progress in the area of disarmament, this has not led to that strengthening of security which we were entitled to expect.

A producer of uranium, Niger has ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and will support, during the negotiations to take place next year, its extension and the universal nature it must acquire.

The signing last year in Paris of the chemical weapons Convention, as well as the unilateral moratoriums proclaimed by the nuclear Powers are today also important constructive steps.

Other efforts should also be made to control conventional weapons and, in a general fashion, to establish confidence-building measures among States.

It is indeed horrendous to see colossal sums absorbed in the manufacture of ever-more sophisticated weapons of destruction and in mortgaging the security of outer space while in vast regions of the world millions of men, women and children are languishing in the most abject misery, engaging in a daily battle against hunger and illness. How many savings could have been made from the resources allotted to peace-keeping if the minimum had been allotted to development?

I am tempted to say here: give economic and social development that which is its due and there will be less to worry about concerning peace.

Indeed, as you so eloquently pointed out on 20 September last after your election, Mr. President, the economic and social situation at the international level is experiencing alarming developments marked by the stamp of uncertainty and adversity for the developing countries, and for Africa in particular.

In the course of this century that is coming to an end, mankind has experienced unprecedented turns that improved the conditions of the lives of individuals. However, in several regions of the world peace is threatened not by armed men but by millions of hungry human beings in distress who see no prospects for improvement of their living conditions.

In this regard, Africa for two decades now has seemed a desperate case, despite its abundant natural wealth. To be sure, progress has been made economically and socially, but in comparison with the rest of the world such progress seems insignificant, and in certain respects entire areas have become settled in a situation of non-development.

Thus, while certain countries in Asia are experiencing expansion with trends of accelerated growth, Africa's economic prospects continue to remain mediocre. Today, more than 350 million Africans are living in abject poverty, more than half of them women and children.

Paradoxically, Africa also shows the signs of a vibrant continent capable of the greatest economic prowess, as long as the international community gives it the opportunity and the means to achieve its potential.

Indeed, how can we speak of a continent on its way to ruin when along with its natural resources Africa has a young generation determined to meet the challenges of history? How can one sideline Africa when its contribution to the global economy throughout past centuries has allowed for the industrialization of the other continents?

Here the industrialized countries bear a heavy responsibility. I should like to recall Niger's position on a particular aspect of this responsibility, namely, the debt. As long as the developing countries, and in particular those of sub-Saharan Africa, continue to devote the greater part of their income to paying off the foreign debt they will never be able to lay down the basis for a genuine economic recovery. Thus, Niger urges the developed countries to cancel the debts of the developing countries and if necessary to give priority to the least developed countries. In so doing the industrialized countries will have answered their own appeal as made by the Group of Seven most highly industrialized countries at the Naples Summit in July 1994.

Along with the debt the continued deterioration of the terms of trade is a subject of great concern for Niger. The purchase price of the products these countries offer on the international market is falling year by year while the prices of manufactured products which the same countries are buying are continuing to rise.

To be competitive, some of these countries have devalued their currency by half, despite the difficult economic, social and political consequences. Quite recently in Morocco the developing countries renewed their faith in the rules governing international trade through their active participation in the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization. We hope that, in return, this organization will be able to fill the gaps in the text of the agreement by taking courageous decisions and adopting measures in favour of the developing countries, in particular those of Africa.

For many of the developing countries international trade is, first of all, trade in commodities. That is why Niger attaches great importance to the establishment of the commodifies Fund and, in so doing, appeals diversification to those countries still reluctant to do so to become involved in the dynamic process under way in this area.

But what the developing countries, and especially the least-developed countries, need most is the establishment of a genuine fund for development assured of lasting resources. It is recognized today that the Bretton Woods institutions have reached their limits in development matters. The conditions attached to World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans are often a genuine impediment to attaining the developing countries' purpose in negotiating the loan agreements.

In his report "An Agenda for Development", the Secretary-General rightly notes that peace is the foundation for development; the economy is the engine of progress; the environment is a basis for sustainability; and social justice is a pillar of society.

My delegation hopes that the consultations to be held on this document will result in a fleshing-out of the initial outline and that the final report will take into account the vital concerns of the developing countries. We hope that it will put forward concrete ways and means to ensure implementation of the development programmes and strategies adopted by the General Assembly over the last few years.

The forthcoming major international conferences - the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements - provide opportunities for us further to enrich this Agenda.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Niger's faith in the ideals of the United Nations and in its ability to find, thanks to the solidarity of all its Members, the right answers to the new challenges we face.

Mr. Legwaila (Botswana): The Government and people of Botswana salute your elevation to the Presidency of the forty-ninth session of the Assembly. Your election by acclamation is a fitting tribute not only to your personal distinction but also to the African continent, on whose soil you were bred and nurtured. It goes without saying, therefore, that the confidence we repose in you as you guide our deliberations is beyond measure.

The Secretary-General's legendary tenacity of purpose at the helm of our Organization has continued to serve us very well indeed. He remains undaunted by the complexities of the problems he faces as the world's chief diplomat and peacemaker in an era marred by the continuing absence of peace. We salute him and his staff of dedicated international civil servants.

Let me also pay a deserved tribute to our dear brother, last year's President, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, whose tenure of office was most effective, productive and creative. We wish him a happy, hard-earned retirement from the service of our General Assembly.

The new world order remains a misnomer. Misery and wretchedness are the order of the day in many parts of the world. The post-cold war era was to be the era of democratization, peace and development, so we hoped. Yes, democratization has taken root in many parts of the world, including our own continent, Africa. That is to be celebrated, and should be celebrated. Unfortunately, the energies and resources that the international community could be deploying to help buttress and nurture emerging democracies have to be expended on the search for solutions to a multiplicity of intractable civil wars.

Tragically, some of these civil wars show no sign of amenability to solutions. They have become perennial; so is the United Nations mission to mitigate them. This places the United Nations in a terrible dilemma, both moral and material. Unfortunately, there is very little choice for our Organization. It would be absolutely unconscionable to abandon a Bosnia or a Somalia to its own wretched devices.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the United Nations peacekeeping commitments are threatening to overwhelm the Organization's capacities. Financial resources to sustain these commitments may soon dry up, if indeed they are available, in tandem with the drying up of support for peace-keeping generally, particularly among the big contributors.

The past year has been a year of mixed blessings for Africa. The continent won a major victory with the liberation of South Africa from the shackles of apartheid and racism. Three-and-a-half centuries of white minority domination have ended, and the construction of a new non-racial society has begun in earnest in South Africa. We heartily congratulate all the people of South Africa, in their racial and cultural diversity, on the wisdom and courage they have shown in coming to terms with their common destiny. We welcome the new South Africa into our midst with open arms.

Southern Africa, the erstwhile cockpit of conflict, has suddenly found salvation and begun the process of reconstruction and regional cooperation and integration. Since peace and stability are universal prerequisites for orderly economic and social development, both of which we have begun to savour in southern Africa, there is every reason why we should be excited about the future of our region.

With the holding of multiparty elections in the sister Republic of Mozambique, the process of democratization in the region will have come closer than ever before to culmination. Increasingly, the region is being guided in the ordering of its political affairs by a set of common democratic values. Through the Southern African Development Community's economic fraternity, mechanisms are being developed to promote regional approaches to the protection of human rights and the safeguarding of the democratic milieu that the region has laboured so hard and shed so much blood to bring about.

As an example, I would mention the case of Lesotho, about which members will have heard. Recently, when democracy was placed in danger there, the region, through the good offices of three Presidents of southern African countries - Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana - sprang into action to engage the Basotho leaders in a dialogue, which happily culminated in the cherished Lesotho democracy being saved without a shot being fired. It was regional conflict-resolution and diplomacy at their very best.

Yet we remain troubled and pained by the fact that not all is well in other parts of the African continent by any stretch of the imagination. Our south western sister Republic of Angola has never had a moment of tranquillity, peace or stability ever since it attained its independence 19 years ago. Blood has continued to flow in that tortured country in ever-increasing profusion, even as we are told the Lusaka talks are on the verge of a successful conclusion. This is the precious blood of innocent Angolans shed needlessly because the multiparty democracy demanded by UNITA and its supporters was won three years ago, only to be subjected to another round of brutal civil war. We remain hopeful, however, that the marathon talks in Lusaka, capital of the Republic of Zambia, will produce an agreement for the parties to implement without reservation.

The Somali tragedy remains intractable. The presence in the fractured country of 18,000 United Nations peace-keeping troops, including Botswanans, has not made much of a difference in the restoration of peace and tranquillity to the Somali people.

Now we are faced with a threat to abandon the country to its fate. The international community has every reason to be frustrated and exasperated by what looks like a total absence of any intention on the part of the warring Somali factions to reconcile and give their nation a chance to drag itself out of the quagmire of civil war. We understand this frustration and exasperation, and yet we would find it absolutely unconscionable for the United Nations simply to uproot itself from Somalia when it is abundantly clear that such a course of action would have catastrophic consequences. The decision to withdraw the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) must be carefully weighed against the obvious consequences of the vacuum it will create.

There is also Liberia, whose agony clearly knows no limit. The madness that is being displayed by the warring factions there is surely beyond comprehension. Is the newly intensified fighting which has caused another exodus of refugees to neighbouring countries and wasted more innocent lives the way to thank the monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) and the international community for the cost in lives and material they have suffered and incurred in an attempt to save Liberia from self-destruction? The first world is already showing signs of extreme weariness about the cost of peace-keeping. Soon even ECOMOG may run out of the means and the will to persist in its seemingly impossible mission to save Liberia from itself. And as long as Liberia is in the state in which it is there is the certainty that peace in the region at large will be and remain imperilled.

Although the carnage has ended in Rwanda, the tragedy that has befallen its people has not. The Rwandese nation cannot reconcile so long as chunks of it are languishing and dying in refugee camps in foreign lands. Rwanda cannot endure any more cycles of civil war and genocidal massacres. The tens or hundreds of thousands of refugees encamped at present in the neighbouring countries must be helped to return to their homeland lest out of the frustrations of exile in their squalid refugee camps they ignite another cycle of genocide.

On the perennial question of Western Sahara, Botswana shares the view that it is taking far too long to hold a referendum in the Territory to allow the Sahraoui people to decide their future. The Territory cannot and must not be allowed to mark time forever in a limbo of uncertainty as if the fulfillment of the aspirations of its people can be delayed until their final submission.

Beyond the African continent, the agony of Bosnia and Herzegovina has continued to outrage the conscience of mankind. The senseless bloodletting in that tormented region of Europe remains stubbornly impervious to solution. Peace plan after peace plan has failed to impress one side or the other, and the result is that the patience of the international community, which has to deploy enormous resources to maintain a massive peace-keeping presence in the area, is being tested beyond endurance. The question we ask is: How can the perpetrators of that cruel conflict ever make sense out of it? We appeal to them to stop the carnage. Meanwhile, we urge the International Tribunal set up to bring to justice the authors and perpetrators of that barbarous war to spare no effort in doing so.

We hope that in the Caribbean, the people of Haiti will take advantage of the massive assistance they are receiving from the international community to normalize the situation in their country. They have a golden opportunity to do so and to resume the journey they started three years ago towards a democratic future. There may be no second - or third - chance.

Botswana believes that the time has come for Cuba and the United States to negotiate an amicable end to their protracted estrangement. Intractable problems all over the world, are being resolved through negotiations, and we do not believe that the cold war between Cuba and the United States is beyond resolution by negotiation. Botswana values the friendship of both countries and cherishes the hope that soon there will be peace and reconciliation between the two neighbours.

The Middle East has broken out of the straitjacket of no war- no peace. We hail the agreement clinched last year between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the *rapprochement* between Israel and Jordan symbolized by the signing of the Washington Declaration to bring to an end the state of war between the two countries, and we urge that no stone be left unturned in the quest for a comprehensive solution to the problems of that very important area of the world.

Unfortunately, the sound of the drums of war in the Gulf area are piercing our ears once again. We hope that this time the parties involved in the war dance are merely trying to exorcise the demons of the politics of brinkmanship, without any intention whatsoever of bringing world peace to the brink and beyond.

The arbitrary division of the island of Cyprus remains unrepaired. We urge the parties to reintensify their search for a mutually acceptable dispensation that will make possible the reunification of the island and its people.

The same applies to the two Koreas. The people of the North and South are Koreans in every sense and soon they must realize that, like the people of South Africa, who have just triumphed over racial division, they too can triumph if they try harder, over ideological division.

We live in the age of dialogue and negotiation, the age of reconciliation and forgiveness. No one will be excused for refusing to negotiate an end to a disagreement.

Over the past two decades my country has experienced an unprecedented period of economic growth. Between 1970 and 1992 Botswana achieved an annual real growth rate of 12 per cent per year in gross domestic product. After being viewed as one of the world's poorest countries, with a per capita income estimated at $70, Botswana suddenly became Africa's success story, a success born out of a stable, democratic political system and a free-market economy. Our democratic system is now so entrenched that it has become our nation's second nature. The happy result is that Botswana is free from any ethnic or tribal conflict.

Regrettably, we have not been spared the wrath of the world recession and have thus experienced dramatic declines in growth rates. Our economic growth, heavily influenced by the development of minerals, particularly diamonds, has experienced adverse effects arising from the fall in the price of diamonds. Our country has entered the most challenging period since independence.

Africa as a whole is engaged, in one form or another, in economic and political reforms that need the support and cooperation of the donor community and the multilateral financial institutions. Poverty is an underlying factor of underdevelopment that many African countries have to contend with today. Regrettably, implementation of the structural adjustment programme, welcome as it is in the restructuring of African economies, has in many instances worsened the social conditions of the poor in the short term. This is why Botswana looks forward to the forthcoming World

Summit on Social Development, where we will have the opportunity to address these anomalies in a very serious manner.

Botswana is encouraged by the ongoing process of reform and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 48/162 has brought about unprecedented changes in the working of the United Nations system, at the level both of the Economic and Social Council and of the Second Committee of the General Assembly; we welcome all of this. It is our hope that these changes will bring about efficiency and effectiveness in addressing the needs and concerns of developing countries at the policy-making and operational levels.

With regard to reform of the Security Council, I can do no better than quote the African Common Position Paper on United Nations Reforms:

> "The expansion and equitable representation in the Security Council has become imperative because of the need to democratize and make the Council more efficient and transparent. In this era, the democracy that is being preached at national level should pervade the international system. It is thus necessary to review both the composition and the decision-making process of the Council, in line with the above principles, and taking into account the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. In implementing these ideals, it is necessary to bear in mind the need for equitable geographical representation, which emphasizes increased permanent membership for developing countries, particularly in Africa."

We are due to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of this Organization. The United Nations has amply vindicated its existence. It survived the distractions and ravages of the cold war with its sense of purpose relatively intact. Botswana's fidelity to the purposes and principles of the Organization's Charter remains unstinting. It is therefore our cherished hope that the next century will usher in an environment in which the Organization will thrive in the pursuit of these purposes and principles.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.

United Nations

A/49/PV.28

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

28th Meeting

Wednesday, 12 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Essy	(Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The first speaker is the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Marcelino Lima, on whom I now call.

Mr. Lima (Guinea-Bissau) *(spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)*: Allow me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you warmly on your noteworthy election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your presence, dear brother, at the head of the Assembly is clear proof of the commitment of your country, Côte d'Ivoire, to the defence of international ideals and the promotion of multilateral diplomacy. Furthermore, your personal competence and the rich diplomatic experience you have acquired over the years are a guarantee of the success of our deliberations. My country, Guinea-Bissau, which holds one of the vice-presidencies, wishes to assure you of its total availability and fullest cooperation.

Our thanks and congratulations also go to your illustrious predecessor, Mr. Samuel Insanally, for the wisdom with which he guided the work of the forty-eighth session.

We would also like to express our congratulations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to pay him a tribute for his tireless activity in the midst of so many dramatic events.

The general debate of the forty-ninth session reflects the logic of the post-cold-war period, in which the burden of blocs, ideological confrontations and threats of nuclear has been lightened, thus creating favourable conditions for a new type of relationship between nations and peoples.

The political and socio-economic changes that have taken place on the international scene undoubtedly will have repercussions on the structure and functioning of the United Nations.

Created 49 years ago, the United Nations has long lived in the context of the bipolarization of blocs and of ideologies. Today more than ever, our Organization is called upon to face the challenges of international politics in a different way.

The positive trend emerging on the international level thanks to joint efforts by many parties to preserve this trend is nonetheless being thwarted by various hotbeds of tension and conflict in different regions of the world.

Guinea-Bissau, aware of this fact and of its harmful consequences, is firmly committed to the promotion of a

---

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

new international conscience, based on respect for human values.

The United Nations, in order to better respond to the requirements of our times, must take these new challenges into account and thus undertake the necessary reforms.

The universally hailed end of bipolarization in international relations has brought about a rebirth of hope for a new era of peace. Alas, the world is still the theatre of tragic and unforeseeable events.

The African continent is one of the regions of the world that is most affected. Drought and desertification, which bring disorder to that continent, diminish its productive capacity and provoke famine, is now being compounded by fratricidal wars.

It is no accident that in the course of recent years more than half of the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations have taken place, unfortunately, in Africa.

In Angola, the people continue to be victims of suffering and atrocities. Guinea-Bissau once again urges the parties to the conflict to fully respect the relevant Security Council resolutions and hopes that the Lusaka talks will produce results.

In Mozambique, significant progress has been achieved in the efforts to establish a lasting peace. We repeat our congratulations to the Government and to the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*, and urge them to persevere along this road, which should lead to the holding of multiparty elections in the coming days.

In Liberia, the situation remains virtually unchanged, despite numerous agreements concluded between the parties concerned. If it continues, this state of affairs may imperil the stability of the subregion.

The situation in Rwanda and in Somalia continues to be of serious concern to my country. We urge all of the parties concerned to end hostilities in favor of dialogue for the achievement of national reconciliation. My Government welcomes the international community's unified actions on behalf of these two countries, in particular "Operation Turquoise," undertaken by France.

With regard to the situation in Western Sahara, my country's delegation welcomes the progress achieved and supports the efforts of the Secretary-General.

Similarly, Guinea-Bissau is of the opinion that the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia must be resolved through peaceful negotiations.

The end of apartheid and the holding of the first free and democratic election in South Africa have turned a page in the history of that country, which is called upon to play an important role in Africa and in the world.

The peace agreement signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which provides for mutual recognition by the two parties, and the agreement between Israel and Jordan represent important steps toward the creation of lasting peace in the region.

Concerning the question of East Timor, we support the continuation of all initiatives undertaken under the auspices of the Secretary-General with a view to bringing about a just and equitable solution.

Regarding Cuba, my country encourages dialogue between the United States and that country to find a solution to the question of the embargo, the repercussions of which have a major impact on the population.

In the case of Haiti, we are pleased to note that after many efforts by the United Nations and the Organization of American States, the fundamental rights of the Haitian people have finally been re-established and democracy restored with the return of the constitutionally elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. It is appropriate here to pay tribute to the decisive role played by the United States in the implementation of Security Council resolution 940 (1994).

Respect for human rights is a factor for peace and a guarantee of international stability. The full exercise of individual rights presupposes the existence of objective conditions of economic and social organization based on justice and equity.

The international community must promote more just and constructive cooperation between States to combat the perverse effects of poverty and improve material conditions in the most needy countries and among the most handicapped populations.

We are pleased at the results achieved by the World Conference on Human Rights and hope that the resolutions and decisions agreed upon there will contribute to the protection and strengthening of human rights.

Like many preceding speakers, I wish to emphasize, on behalf of Guinea-Bissau, that it is our firm conviction that the Republic of China in Taiwan should regain its place in the United Nations, on the basis of the principles of parallel representation of divided countries. As a full-fledged Member of the United Nations, the Republic of China in Taiwan, with its 20,000,000 inhabitants and its highly advanced stage of economic and technological development, could play a preponderant role on the international scene. We hope that at its next session, which will coincide with the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of our world Organization, the General Assembly will decide to put this item on its agenda.

Guinea-Bissau has just carried out multiparty legislative and presidential elections, which were considered just and transparent by our people and by international observers. These elections, which showed the good citizenship and maturity of the people of Guinea-Bissau, took place in a climate of exemplary civilian peace. Our country is firmly committed to the preservation and the deepening of pluralistic democracy, a condition sine qua non for any type of lasting development.

As emphasized by His Excellency João Bernardo Vieira, President of our Republic, at his inauguration on 29 September this year, there were no losers in the elections in Guinea-Bissau. All the people of Guinea-Bissau and our country's national unity, stability and development were winners.

At this new stage in the history of our country we are of course counting on our people's determination, but also on the international community's support.

We welcome the success of the Uruguay Round and the prospects for international trade that were opened up with the signing of the Marrakesh Agreement and the establishment of the World Trade Organization. We believe that the achievement of the objectives after more than eight years of negotiations, resulting in the Declaration of Marrakesh, should have beneficial consequences for the developing countries, thus enabling trade to play its efficient role as a motor for development.

We believe that it is urgent to revise the current economic order, which strongly penalizes the developing countries. Indeed, these countries, and those of Africa in particular, are faced with the problems of the outflow of capital and the deterioration of the terms of trade, which seriously compromise the economic and social development of the countries of the South. This extremely painful situation is a significant cause of the developing countries' external indebtedness.

The external debt of the developing countries in general and of the African countries in particular remains an unbearable burden for their economies and a major obstacle to their development.

Guinea-Bissau, with the support of its principal economic partners, is continuing its efforts to find an appropriate and lasting solution to the debt problem, which has serious consequences for its socio-economic development.

We consider that the Organization should devote special attention to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Agrica in the 1990s in order to speed up the process of the socio-economic transformation of the continent. Similarly, we support the rapid implementation of the "Agenda for Development".

The problem of desertification represents a major concern for the Government of Guinea-Bissau, a country which, because it is located in the Sudano-Sahelian region, is faced with persistent irregularities in rainfall, as well as massive invasions of insects that destroy agricultural production. In this context, our country supports the signing of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa.

The social and economic development activities of the United Nations are in our view aimed in particular at the most vulnerable groups - women, children, young people, the aged and the handicapped. The situation in which the majority of people in the developing world are now living deserves special attention from our Organization.

In fact, the solution of the problem lies in a better development of North-South cooperation. If there is to be progress in the developing countries, health and education systems must be upgraded, and machinery must be established to eradicate hunger and poverty and improve living conditions in the world.

We repeat our support for the convening of the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 and of the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as the Preparatory Conference in Dakar and Habitat II.

The international community is capable of meeting the challenges facing it and of resolving complex problems. Our Organization has many, sometimes difficult, tasks to accomplish. It is our sincere wish that the process of restructuring the United Nations system, so necessary for the revitalization of the Organization, can be completed, so that the hopes that prevailed at the founding of the United Nations will be seen in a new light when we celebrate the forthcoming fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Economic Development and Attorney General of Belize, His Excellency the Honourable Dean Barrow, on whom I now call.

Mr. Barrow (Belize): The delegation of Belize warmly congratulates you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are proud that such an illustrious son of Africa has been selected to preside over our deliberations in this period leading up to the celebration of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary year.

Permit me too to express my delegation's thanks and praise for the sterling performance of your immediate predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana.

Once again we gather to review the state of world order. And of the year just past it might perhaps be said that it was the best of times and the worst of times.

On the one hand, a jubilant South Africa kept its rendezvous with freedom and now appears to be bathed in sunlight. Furthermore, the peace in the Middle East, presaged by the Agreement on Palestinian self-rule, is taking root. Tension on the Korean peninsula has eased, and the cease-fire in Northern Ireland represents a hitherto unimaginable breakthrough.

On the other hand, the pall of nuclear weapons still hangs over our fragile planet. So does the gloom of conventional armaments, the din of battle and the smell of rotting flesh in the Balkans, parts of our beloved Africa and western and central Asia. In particular, the scale of the tragedy in Rwanda has been incomprehensible. The initial paralysis of will of the world community, our belated response in the face of horrible genocide, has not been our finest hour. That hesitation, that failure of leadership, underscores the need for the United Nations system's preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping mechanisms to be better developed as a matter of urgency.

The fact is that there is still rampant lawlessness abroad on our planet, and we continue to be traumatized by the death and destruction it brings. In particular, the living hell of refugees, fleeing almost inconceivable conditions of terror, seems to have become a stock feature of our end-of-the-century international existence.

In this sort of depressing world political climate, even small countries such as mine must do what we can to ease the pain. Thus it was that Belize became the first small State to agree to participate in the multinational force currently overseeing the end of tyranny in Haiti. We took seriously the Security Council's particular invitation to regional States and hope now that the collective response will succeed in giving our beleaguered sister republic surcease from its unhappy history and a chance of lasting peace and true democracy. We salute the Haitian people and we congratulate President Aristide. We expect soon to be able to send our messages of congratulations direct to the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince.

In Belize's own neighbourhood, the redemocratization of the Central American isthmus continues apace. In the last year, the free elections and orderly transitions of power that have taken place in Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Honduras have vindicated our new-found, or rather rediscovered, destiny. In Guatemala, a plebiscite, congressional elections and the Oslo Agreement between the Government and the *Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca* (URNG) guerrilla group have strengthened the internal order. Furthermore, that country has undertaken, in its letter to the Secretary-General (A/49/94 of 14 March 1994) to abide by pacific principles and good-neighbourliness in its relations with my country. As a Member of this Organization, with our historical and constitutional land and sea borders universally recognized as inviolable in accordance with the principles of self-determination, sovereignty and territorial integrity, Belize welcomes this Guatemalan commitment. It is a further encouragement to regional peace.

Talking of peace, we note with interest the development of the concept of stand-by forces. This idea needs to be deepened and refined, and arrangements should be made for appropriate training in regional training centres. In this regard, Belize's offer to serve as one such locale, making special use of our jungle terrain and facilities, is a matter of record.

This Organization must be allowed to develop an agency for rapid and effective military deployment. Again, we call for the implementation of Article 43 of the Charter.

What we are saying is that security and world order must be significantly improved. Mankind and the vision of our founders must be vindicated. In that light, we reiterate the call we made during last year's debate for reform of the Security Council. Since that time, we have refined our ideas on that subject. These include our proposals that certain developing countries, on account of sheer population numbers and geopolitical realities, should be permanent, or indefinite, members; that contributions to the peace-keeping budget should be a relevant criterion for permanent, or indefinite, membership; and that, in both existing categories of membership, adjacent States should be permitted to pool their resources as composite or constituency members. We now call upon all the members of this Assembly to ensure that, by the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, we shall demonstrate our commitment to world order by democratically bringing the Council to a better state of grace.

Another aspect of international order that deserves mention is that of the number of entities which are not fully embraced by the notion of universality in our Charter and which do not participate completely in the system of international order. These entities are mostly in or around the Asia-Pacific region, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. We call on all parties in good faith to continue their various dialogues to resolve this issue.

To contribute to this restructuring of world order, we are in the process of finalizing a massive new economic dimension with the conclusion of the multilateral trade negotiations, the establishment of the World Trade Organization, the development of new mechanisms for the resolution of trade disputes and the deepening and widening of the system of norms relating to international commerce. We applaud the transformation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and these other advances, while urging that the less well-endowed countries receive their due, both under domestic jurisdictions and laws and in adjudications by the new organization. Rampant unilateralism and protectionism must now take a back seat. We are satisfied at the expansion of the institution of non-discrimination into such new areas as trade in services and trade-related investment measures. We are also happy that dumping and subsidies regulations have now been significantly improved and that progress has been made in the trying area of safeguards.

We hope, however, that the thread of liberalism that runs through these new instruments will not become a noose to suffocate those of us that did not inherit a head start. We therefore call for sensitivity in the application of those various provisions for special and differential treatment of such countries.

In the same vein, we would wish for increased sensitization on the part of the Bretton Woods institutions. Even as the global order swings to and fro, we call for improvement of the various mechanisms as they affect our sensitive economies.

In Belize we have begun our own adjustment process. This is necessary if we are to cope with the initial dislocations to small economies, which will be the inevitable consequence of the new international trading realities. As well, the profligate behaviour of the central Government between September 1989 and June 1993 had resulted in an unmanageable deficit, precipitously declining reserves and imprudent short-term, high-interest foreign borrowing.

So we seek now to restore fiscal discipline and regain macro-economic stability. We are also intent on removing the traditional distortions inherent in the domestic trading regime, and on instituting tax reform that will eliminate our overreliance on import duties. This is a process that we must manage carefully, since drastic reductions in public expenditure and trade liberalization will work initial hardship on our local economy. In this context, the Bretton Woods institutions have a duty to respond to our special circumstances. Support for our public and private sectors must be forthcoming, for the brave new economic world that we must enter, whether voluntarily or otherwise, will no doubt prove a most inhospitable clime to those not clothed with the requisite garb.

In particular, the funds for skills training, human resource development and poverty alleviation must be found. Our young people are already hostage to the subculture of violence perpetrated as much by the television images transported undiluted from the first world, as by the indigenous problems peculiar to our small societies. The hope-extinguishing cycle of alienation, joblessness and incarceration must be broken. Otherwise, those nice new economic edifices we are so carefully constructing will come crashing to the ground, undone by the confrontation and social chaos that continued marginalization of our youth will surely engender.

We repeat, then, that small, hitherto hardy, democracies must not now be swamped by a heedless forward march of soulless economic principles. And the case for urgent Bretton Woods social and economic assistance should be even more compelling in the instance of voluntary, *vis-à-vis* imposed, structural adjustment.

We are somewhat embarrassed that, almost 50 years on, this journey into a putative glorious world order just now sees us seriously crafting new substantive agendas for what are really some very old problems. Yet, we must deal with reality. The development decades and the new international economic order were, in part, chimeric or exercises in rhetoric. But I believe we are truly now engaged in writing a new, coherent, agenda for development. Let it be a properly annotated agenda. In fact, let it be a fully programmed model that entirely anticipates what lies ahead.

We are grateful that this Organization is also taking note of the unfulfilled promises of the Second World War order. It is now 53 years since the call for social justice went out in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. Yet we are far from freedom from want and improved social security. Now, with the recently concluded Conference on Population and Development, and with the World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development just before us, the opportunity is here again. Let us seize it and develop bold concepts and effective normative systems. And while we do so, let us continue to develop such recent notions as those relating to the relief of children in difficult circumstances. Let us also develop this Organization's capacity for technical assistance in crime prevention and interdiction to those United Nations Members which are increasingly beset by the scourge of violence, weapons and narcotics. These plagues are, almost invariably, brought on by demands and excesses imported from thousands of miles away, mostly with the aid of the electronic media.

Another area in which we are still in the agenda stage is that of humanitarianism. Despite unfair criticism, the Secretariat has done what it could to carry out the promises made in the Charter. We commend all concerned with the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, and we pledge to work beside them.

Another relatively recent watchword is sustainability. It has a redolence to which we have all taken with alacrity. It warns the well-endowed of the truth of the adage "Waste not, want not". It reminds the less fortunate to try to resolve their dilemma wisely, as necessity obliges them to reduce their woodlands while leaching the present vitality of the land. It has brought us out of our slumber and humbled us into sincere discussions about fish stocks, fragile low-lying developing small island and coastal areas, and global warming.

We have seen the Commission for Sustainable Development and the Global Environment Facility take their faltering first steps. While they are to some extent further examples of the somewhat unstructured way in which the Organization is sometimes obliged to operate, we nevertheless commend those agencies. And we sincerely hope that sustainability will keep us whole.

Another area in which the Organization has been discovering its role is human rights. We all recently participated in the stimulating exercise of establishing the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights. We have seen the number of instruments on that subject increase. Human rights bodies have become more experienced and effective. Even in the field of population and development, we notice how the recent Cairo Programme of Action uses human rights as its main point of departure. It is striking that, in places, that document alphabetizes the basic species of human rights. So did the Assembly's resolution establishing the post of High Commissioner. We did this to stress the non-selectivity and neutrality of the various genres of human rights. That is to say, cultural, economic and social rights are as much our concern as civil and political rights. The coincidence of development with population and other concerns in the Cairo document, and the stress of the right to development both in the resolution establishing the post of High Commissioner and in the Cairo document, underscore the coequal importance of that category of right. I believe that we are now seeing the beginning of the concretization of international concern about a wider range of human rights for individuals and, I beg to stress, groups and peoples.

Above all, these recent developments in the field of human rights, sustainable development and social justice are pointing us to the reality that values must become an integral part of statecraft and of diplomacy. Only by inculcating respect for values will our world straighten up and fly right.

In our fledgling world order, my subregion of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has begun to show signs of coming of age. We have established several new structures for subregional integration and cooperation. We recently joined our friends and neighbours in the non-English-speaking Caribbean and proximate mainland areas in signing a treaty to establish an ambitious Association of Caribbean States designed to bring about coordination, concentration and cooperation in our far-flung proto-region. Even before this, CARICOM had begun to develop separate cooperative relationships with Central America, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela. In all of these endeavours, it has become more widely noted that Belize is ideally situated to assist with this bringing together of various subregions. We are equidistant from Tijuana and Paramaribo and, in other respects, are at the very centre of this new Caribbean. Belize is bilingual and multi-cultural. Besides, Belize has a history and a polity which well equip us for this role.

We earlier referred to the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. This is an important aspect of the world order. It is also the quintessential example of the need for reform and revitalization of this Organization.

The General Assembly's health is generally quite good. However, in some respects it needs improvement. One such area is the roster for this general debate. The annual seating arrangements for our numerous members are made quite democratically and scientifically. Yet the order of the list of speakers in this debate is not fixed in quite the same manner. What is the justification for annually placing certain nations at certain positions at the end of the list? I remember that the Christian Bible makes flattering references to what comes "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" *(The Bible, Psalms 8:2)*. Similar expressions can be found in every philosophy and religion on this planet. It is time that this be learned and observed by those who prepare the annual speakers' list.

With many others, we call for the development of an improved system of coordination here at Headquarters of the structure of the Organization's machinery in the social and economic sectors. More thought must also be given to the rationalization and coordination of the Organization's multifarious development agencies in the field.

Even as the World Trade Organization and the Bretton Woods institutions develop their separate complexes of structures and prescriptions, my delegation sees a greater need for overall coordination by this premier Organization. The United Nations must be appropriately developed as the first among equals within the global organizational system.

We laud the Secretary-General and the Assembly for improvement in the systems of oversight and conditions of service, especially in the area of gender equity. But equitable distribution of staff posts and responsibilities within all United Nations bodies must be radically improved.

Above all, the United Nations must learn to speak to, not at, the peoples of the world. In the ongoing efforts to rearticulate, reinform and reinforce the vision of the Charter's framers, we can even envisage our Chief Executive going on camera on popular talk shows, teaching new constituencies about what is after all their organization. He should continue to find bully pulpits in the global electronic information meeting-place, for the need to sound the themes that underline the continuing vitality of our world body is particularly urgent at this time. After all, in the run-up to our fiftieth anniversary we must be able to give a proper account of our stewardship, to withstand the special scrutiny we will surely now provoke. Our world Government has to demonstrate that it is relevant, effective, moral and, above all, democratic. It is only then that we can fully expect that it will be able hereafter to call out ever more clearly, forcefully and directly to "We the peoples of the world".

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call next on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, Trade and Industry of Saint Lucia, His Excellency the Honourable William George Mallet.

Mr. Mallet (Saint Lucia): Permit me, Sir, to extend to you the congratulations of my country and of my delegation on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. You bring with you to the office of the presidency experience which is both wide and varied. Added to this is your well-known commitment to the ideals and principles that govern this Organization. These qualities together serve to provide us with every confidence that under your distinguished guidance our deliberations cannot but be productive in the furtherance of the objectives of this world body.

I want also to take this opportunity to applaud Ambassador Insanally of Guyana for the distinguished manner in which he led the Assembly during its forty-eighth session.

As the international community gathers once again to bring its collective wisdom to bear on solutions for dealing with problems which continue to threaten the welfare of the world and its people, we cannot but, with a sense of mixed emotions, reflect on what we as a body have been able to accomplish to date. Those emotions range from the satisfaction experienced at the success of our collective efforts to bring about a climate of coexistence and harmony in South Africa and the Middle East - with the prospects now provided for human advancement in those regions - to the sense of deep regret that, even as we record such major successes, the suffering and the waste of human life caused by territorial conflict and the injustice of decisions based on ethnic considerations continue to place serious obstacles in the path of universal progress.

My delegation salutes both President Mandela and Vice President de Klerk for their courage and determination in working together to consolidate their strong beginnings in the direction of a multiracial democracy. My delegation will continue to support the international community in its efforts to assist the millions of deprived South Africans attain a better quality of life.

However, my delegation is still deeply concerned about some other countries in Africa, which continue to wage a hopeless battle against poverty, disease, debt settlement and political strife. It is important that more attention be given to the economic welfare of Africa to prevent other unfortunate massacres similar to those witnessed in Rwanda and Somalia.

In keeping with the spirit of universality that prevails today, Saint Lucia had hoped that the question of full membership of the United Nations for the Republic of China on Taiwan would be favourably considered as a supplementary item on the agenda. Saint Lucia continues to lend its support to the Republic of China on Taiwan in its efforts to achieve full membership of the United Nations, and urges the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the fiftieth session. It is indeed anomalous that a country already making a valuable contribution on the international stage should continue to find itself debarred from participation in the family of nations.

Saint Lucia is heartened by the progress towards peace in the Middle East that has been achieved between Israel and Palestine and between Israel and Jordan. However, my delegation notes with some concern the renewed potential for conflict between Iraq and Kuwait, and again calls upon the Government of Iraq to recognize and respect the territorial integrity of the State of Kuwait.

The devastating conflict in the former Yugoslavia, which the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has lamented has spared no one in its violence, remains, like several other conflicts around the world, a major focus of peace-keeping and humanitarian efforts by the United Nations.

These conflicts not only challenge the capacity of the United Nations to deal with those problems in a way that would lead to their resolution, but also engender new and frightening dimensions of human suffering, resulting from the large-scale displacement of populations and the concomitant disabilities to which they become exposed.

The net effect of such calamities goes beyond the urgent call for a global response, in that it creates new stresses in the developing world, through the diversion of scarce resources away from peaceful development, into attenuating human suffering.

My delegation therefore wholeheartedly supports efforts by the Secretary-General to foster greater regional involvement in conflict-resolution and in the creation of appropriate humanitarian support structures.

With rising unemployment, poverty and drug abuse, our societies face an almost insurmountable challenge which threatens the ability of our youth to achieve their true potential. The response to this mounting threat resides in a universal blueprint aimed at reversing the economic and social ills from which it springs. In this regard my delegation supports the Secretary-General's Agenda for Development.

The International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo this year, was a powerful initiative, however contentious some of the issues may have been. The forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen and the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, offer prospects of great promise in identifying new approaches to the attainment of productive employment and the release of innate capacities as well as the empowerment and participation of all sectors of the population in the alleviation of their conditions. My country will participate in and support those processes.

Saint Lucia is of the view that the issues leading to the isolation of Cuba from the mainstream of economic and social development within our hemisphere are overdue for re-examination. My delegation calls for the speedy removal of all impediments to Cuba's ability to participate within the commonwealth of nations in the manner permitted by the Charter of the United Nations.

The recently concluded agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Cuba on immigration is timely and welcome. My delegation expresses the hope that this agreement will open new vistas for further dialogue and greater understanding between the two countries.

Like other countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Saint Lucia shares the vision of hope for Haiti. We are proud to be a participant in the United Nations Mission in Haiti, as we have participated in former means of assistance to Haiti, and, along with our CARICOM counterparts, assisted by the wider international community, will work tirelessly for the successful implantation of true democracy in Haiti. The unfolding events of the past few days give added impetus to the efforts of the regional and international community to bring Haiti towards self-fulfilment within the community of democratic nations.

It has been made clear that the holding of democratic elections and the installation of a legitimate Government cannot by themselves guarantee democracy, especially in a country devoid of democratic traditions. To sustain such democratic beginnings, appropriate structures must be put in place, adequately resourced in both human and material terms, and suitable support mechanisms must be designed and firmly rooted. Above all, there must be the international will to encourage, facilitate and enrich this democratic process, as would be exemplified through massive development assistance over a sustained period.

The global economic situation is at present at a critical crossroads, reflecting a speedily moving trend towards trade liberalization and the need for national economies to improve their own efficiency and competitiveness.

The constraints of smallness have continually conspired against States like Saint Lucia in terms of its ability meaningfully to raise its gross domestic product. While the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and its successor organization the World Trade Organization, seem to offer medium- and long-term benefits at least to some developed countries, there remains a nagging concern among developing countries that certain barriers may still remain, or be created, that would effectively militate against the products of developing countries entering the markets of developed countries.

My delegation joins with the rest of the developing world in calling upon the developed world, and the major international institutions, to re-examine their policies and emphases, with a view to adopting measures that can realistically assist small developing economies in their attempts to keep pace with the dictates of contemporary economic trends.

Of particular concern must be the consequences of these new developments for small island States such as ours, whose exposed economies make them vulnerable and sensitive to changes that take place elsewhere. Saint Lucia's economy, for instance, has already experienced the shock resulting from changes brought about by the advent of the European Union.

Saint Lucia's economy is highly dependent on its export of bananas to the European Union and despite new arrangements put in place to provide limited access guarantees for fruit from African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) - and Saint Lucia expresses its appreciation to those European States that have been instrumental in securing these arrangements - the industry in Saint Lucia has experienced a devastating downturn in prices, which in turn has been directly responsible for the economic disruption, and its allied social instability, that occurred during the latter part of 1993 and this year, 1994.

It is to be regretted that even the limited concessions provided by Europe in discharge of its treaty obligations, have been subjected to a withering attack by forces which seem fully prepared to see the economies of small island States, already possessing so little room for flexibility, placed in total jeopardy.

That is the experience that urges this delegation again to call the attention of the international community to the special circumstances of small island developing States and the need for particular measures to deal with their peculiar circumstances.

The Government of Saint Lucia has been observing with some concern the development of the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), given the serious adverse consequences it will have in the medium term and long term for relatively nascent industries and the micro-economies of our small States. My Government regrets that United States legislation on NAFTA contains no expressed arrangement which takes into account the limits of our industrial base. Consequently, the fragility of our economies will only worsen, resulting in economic and social discontent.

In this regard we appeal to the international community for special trade considerations while adjustments are made to meet the international challenges that the world economic environment engenders.

The countries of the Caribbean Community, cognizant of the rapidly changing economic environment, and the urgent need for cooperative effort to adjust, and in some cases, survive the challenges ensuing from this change, have undertaken measures to deepen their relations with their Caribbean neighbours by formally creating the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), membership of which encompasses all countries washed by the Caribbean Sea. We hope the international community will be helpful in encouraging this self-help initiative to achieve its full potential.

Last year, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, the issue of sustainable development was accepted as a major component to be included in the development agendas of countries the world over. Arising out of the universal blueprint emerging from that Conference is the recognition, at last, of the peculiar circumstances of small island developing States in their pursuit of sustainable development.

Designing development policies and implementing programmes for small island States such as Saint Lucia require considerable imagination and ingenuity, as was shown by the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados earlier this year.

A successful follow-up to that Conference would rely heavily on financial resources for the implementation of its findings. My delegation calls upon the international community to provide active support to the United Nations Development Programme, which has been charged with the responsibility for the coordination and implementation of the programme of action.

Our small island State, Saint Lucia, seems to oscillate between triumph and disaster. Last year we highlighted our triumphs in the recognition of our two Nobel laureates. This year the disastrous hand of nature in the form of tropical storm "Debbie" struck Saint Lucia, dramatically emphasizing the vulnerability of small island developing States. Over an 11-hour period, this small 660-square-kilometre territory, historically dependent on agriculture, mainly bananas, tourism and small-scale manufacturing, was battered by nearly 15 inches of rain, resulting in four deaths by drowning, numerous landslides, and massive flooding that destroyed bridges, roads, houses, and 60 per cent of the banana crop. Even our international airport lay buried temporarily beneath two feet of water and mud.

With over 50 per cent of the working population of Saint Lucia engaged in banana-associated enterprises, and with more than 50 per cent of export earnings derived from banana exports, destruction of 60 per cent of the banana crop cannot but create serious economic and social consequences for us. This again underscores the vulnerability of small States like ours, and the need for the international community to recognize their special peculiarities and needs and to make appropriate provisions to facilitate their survival.

Permit me, on behalf of my Prime Minister, and the Government and people of Saint Lucia, to express profound thanks and appreciation to the several members and agencies of our Organization for their expressions of sympathy, concern and support, and, in several cases, offers or tangible manifestations of assistance in our time of need.

As we focus on the milestone of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and its Charter, we should perceive the ideas that subtend this body as a cementing balm that would bring the disparate pieces of our shattered globe together in peace, harmony, creativity and beauty. The United Nations has over the years been party to the achievement of many political strides towards democratization and unprecedented levels of cooperation between nation States.

The global situation that necessitated the creation of the United Nations has undergone tremendous changes over the last 50 years. Our membership has more than doubled, and, as we continue to witness the emergence of new States, social and economic demands increase, coupled with new, pressing concerns, such as the environment, women's rights, children's rights and good governance, to name a few. My delegation supports the demand for enhancing the resources of the United Nations to enable it to cope with its expanded responsibilities. It is also necessary that this Assembly be made more effective and efficient in the execution of its functions, so that it can become more responsive to the needs particularly of developing countries, and can assist those countries in their development processes.

Saint Lucia joins scores of other delegates in calling for an increase in the membership of the Security Council to reflect the increase in membership of this Organization and the concept of universality that the Charter advocates. It is also necessary that the Security Council allow for more consultation with the General Assembly in its deliberations so that its perspectives may become even more reflective of the world community.

In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech in 1993, entitled "The Antilles, Fragments of an Epic Memory," Saint Lucia's Poet Laureate, Derek Walcott, said:

> "Break a vase and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole."

We see in this idea the touchstone for the United Nations and the international community as this Organization approaches its anniversary year. We can extend this perception to embrace the cracked vases of our globe, in which the horrors of Somalia, the demoralization and brutality of Haiti, the carnage of the Anglo-Irish conflict and the racial bigotry in other parts of the world are all seen as products of the accident of history and the poverty of the human spirit. It is hoped that through the efforts of the United Nations a renewed humanitarianism will be engendered and bound with a strength that guarantees peace and the well-being of the world and its people.

Mr. Pursoo (Grenada): My delegation is pleased to convey warmest greetings from the Government and people of Grenada to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We also wish to extend sincere congratulations to Your Excellency Mr. Amara Essy, Foreign Minister of Côte d'Ivoire, on your election to the presidency of this session. The Government of Grenada takes this opportunity to commend Ambassador Samuel Insanally, the first representative from the Caribbean ever to hold the high office of President of the General Assembly, for his exemplary conduct of the proceedings of the forty-eighth session. We are indeed proud of his performance.

Grenada also wishes to express profound appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his relentless efforts in the pursuit of the purposes of this Organization.

Grenada is pleased to welcome the new South Africa to the United Nations, and we pay special tribute to His Excellency President Nelson Mandela for his resolute will and firm determination in the fight against apartheid, which eventually resulted in this new, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Grenada is pleased that in recent efforts to bring an end to the illegal seizure of power by the military in Haiti and to halt the ensuing human rights abuses there diplomacy prevailed and further bloodshed was averted. We now eagerly await the reinstatement of the duly elected Government and its President, Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and the return of democracy to Haiti. We support the actions taken by the United States of America and other multinational forces in implementation of United Nations resolutions on Haiti, and we join like-minded nations as they move to establish the structures in which development and democracy can be sustained.

Grenada is prepared to do its part to ensure a more fertile ground for the growth of democracy in Haiti, our sister Caribbean country. We are proud that, within the limits of our resources, personnel from Grenada's law enforcement services are among the multinational contingent to help in "Operation Uphold Democracy". After all, it was 11 years ago this month that Grenada itself profited from a similar multinational operation, affording us the historic opportunity to restore democratic principles to our way of life. It is therefore only natural that Grenada should wish Haiti well and should be prepared to support democracy in that country as fully as we do.

Over the last several years many of the small developing countries within this Organization have been experiencing growing economic problems. The forced response has been to take stringent corrective measures aimed at stabilizing their economies and creating the conditions for sustainable development. Speaking specifically of my own country, Grenada, I can inform the Assembly that in 1992 we embarked on a voluntary three-year structural adjustment programme in an effort to correct serious fiscal imbalances and to put the country on a path of sustained growth.

This year marks the end of the programme, and I am happy to report that some success has been achieved. The Government has significantly reduced the fiscal deficits from 25 per cent of gross domestic product in 1992 to 11 per cent in 1993 and 9 per cent to date. Moreover, Grenada's credit rating has improved notably, with its creditworthiness restored by the World Bank in June of this year after having been forfeited in 1988.

Whatever success has been recorded by that programme is a credit to regionalism, since the programme was instituted with enormous regional inputs. Grenada wishes publicly to thank the regional Governments and institutions which contributed to the effort. This particular development means that Grenada is now viewed more favourably by the multilateral and specialized donor agencies and friendly Governments in terms of external financial assistance for its development programmes.

Despite the good fiscal performance, the structural-adjustment programme has not been able to achieve its targets in terms of the growth rate of the gross domestic product. Thus, over the next two years much emphasis will be placed on achieving a reasonable rate of economic growth. In addition, efforts to reduce the fiscal deficits further will continue to be vigorously pursued.

You, Mr. President, are well aware that a topic of particular currency in the area of international economic relations is the issue of trade and investment. Of course, over the past months new trading blocs have been created, with the result that in the Western Hemisphere we now have several such arrangements, which include the very important North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). While all the implications of NAFTA are not yet known, we must nevertheless now seek to position our economies to interface with the realities of this new economic environment.

In that context, the conclusion of the latest round of the negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has very far-reaching consequences for trade. The requirements of trade liberalization and reciprocity mean that small island developing States like Grenada must now interact on the same playing field as the more developed countries, which, in effect, signals a rapid erosion of the preferential treatment that some of us have enjoyed over the past two decades. The removal of access to market arrangements traditionally favourable to fledgling industries in our societies - the banana industry, for example - compounds our difficulties and presents a major threat to the overall well-being of our small economies. Furthermore, the creation of the World Trade Organization would most definitely change the face of international trade, and while every independent nation has the opportunity to become a party to that Organization and thus attempt to influence its operations, it is evident that, on that score, equality will not necessarily ensure equity. We are cognizant of the fact that we must now seek to enhance our productivity and competitiveness in carefully selected areas if we are to survive in this era of trade liberalization. But, more often than not, we cannot do it alone, and this is why my delegation appeals to the developed countries to be considerate of our fragile economies and the need to adapt to this seemingly hostile economic environment.

The recent success of the United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados, and the adoption of its Programme of Action underscore the urgent need for international co-operation and assistance, not only in the form of financial resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action, but also in access to markets, acquisition of new technologies and institutional and human-resource development, so as to enable us to respond more capably to the challenges of finding new paths to sustainable development.

The advances made since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must be built upon, and in this regard the importance of forging new global partnerships between developed and developing countries ought to be given priority. The protection of the global climate and biological diversity, the sustainable use and conservation of all marine resources and the protection of our oceans and high seas require urgent international assistance and cooperation.

My delegation therefore looks forward to the fulfilment of the obligations of the developed countries that have pledged their commitment to assist developing countries and, in particular, small island developing States, in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of Agenda 21, the conventions on climate change and biodiversity and all the follow-up conferences of the Rio Conference.

For several years Grenada has expressed its concern at the apparent unbalanced resource commitment to security issues versus development. Consequently, my delegation commends recently expanded efforts aimed at giving greater prominence to the development needs confronting the world, particularly in the developing countries. We applaud the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Development" and we applaud the former President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, for his visionary initiative in organizing the World Hearings on Development in June of this year. We urge that the momentum gained therefrom be maintained, and we wish to place on record our support for Brazil's call for a global conference on development in the year 1996.

The question of population and development is a very sensitive issue, one that demands continuous conscientious global effort. Grenada is encouraged by the consensus which emerged from the recently concluded International Conference on Population and Development at Cairo, and we are hopeful that increasingly balanced development will be viewed as the essential basis on which to treat the issue of population.

We are also confident that the Conference on Women to be held at Beijing in 1995 will address one of the long-standing issues critical to development, that is, the issue of women in development.

In March of 1995 world leaders will gather in Copenhagen to address one of the most pressing questions of our time, the question of social development. We will be asked to rule on the debilitating issues of poverty, meaningful employment and social inclusion. We will be asked to rule particularly in the interest of youth, the aged, the disabled and all those outside the mainstream of social integration.

Grenada is confident that the World Summit for Social Development and all the other follow-ups to the Rio Conference are replacing despair with hope worldwide. At the same time, we are concerned about the different spins that may be put on the interpretation of those agreements. For example, we are concerned that environmental causes should not be used as barriers to access for goods produced in developing countries to the markets of those with more prosperous economies. We hope that, on the contrary, the developed countries will appreciate the need to assist the poorer countries to gain access to the technologies and technological know-how necessary to the promotion of more-balanced development on a global scale.

Stability within and between States is a prerequisite for international peace and security. Grenada is encouraged by certain developments, beginning almost a year ago with the signing of the historic peace treaty between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. We believe that the emergence of self-rule in Jericho and Gaza is of great significance. We look forward to further positive developments in the Middle East peace process and wish all the countries in that region the peace and stability upon which lasting prosperity will be built.

Grenada is encouraged by the diplomatic efforts in the search for a permanent solution to the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We commend the United Nations for its resolve and determination in this regard. We fully support the establishment of the International Tribunal to try allegations of war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. By the same token, Grenada fully supports similar initiatives in response to situations in other parts of the world, where these are deemed appropriate.

In the light of the unfortunate circumstances in Rwanda that resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, and bearing in mind other situations of human devastation, Grenada wishes to express its satisfaction with the responses from those members of the international community that have gone to the aid of people in various sorry situations. We also wish to convey our appreciation to the relief agencies and others whose tireless efforts have saved lives, restored health to the sick and hungry and brought comfort to countless victims - particularly women and children.

My delegation wishes to underscore the importance of human rights, freedom and good governance as vital preconditions to domestic quietude, international harmony and the creation of the climate necessary for the achievement of progress within societies. In this regard, the promotion and protection of the rights of children is an issue that cries out for greater attention. The well-being of children cannot wait for the unprompted evolution of societies. Deliberate efforts must be expedited at various levels, global and national, to ensure the promotion and protection of children's rights. Likewise, in this the International Year of the Family and beyond, emphasis should continue to be placed on the pivotal role of the family in national and global development.

The end of the cold-war era presents opportunities for a shift from political and ideological divide to cooperation in the areas of economic and social development. New economic Powers on the world scene seek to occupy positions that were once the prerogative of the traditional super-Powers. Grenada believes that the structure of the organs of the United Nations should reflect these new developments and, at the same time, make provision for geographical representation that is consistent with today's global, political and economic realities. Reforms currently being undertaken in the United Nations system provide an opportunity to examine the question of expanding the Security Council and the question of the veto power in the light of these new realities.

Grenada supports the principle of universality and encourages the General Assembly to give renewed consideration to the wish of the Republic of China - a founding Member of the United Nations - to participate in the Organization and its specialized agencies as a full Member. We believe that this appeal from the 21 million people of the Republic of China in Taiwan for a voice and proper representation in the international community is both moral and legitimate. The inclusion of the Republic of China in Taiwan in the United Nations would further contribute to global cooperation in trade, economic development and environmental and ecological protection. In addition, it would assist in the promotion of international development assistance to developing countries. Grenada believes that a committee should be set up to examine the exceptional nature of the situation of the Republic of China in the present international context.

So long as drug traffickers and international arms dealers continue to ply their trade, and so long as mercenaries, terrorists and other adventurists exist, the protection and security of small States will remain particularly vulnerable to acts of aggression, from without as well as from within.

While the United Nations Charter recognizes the right of States to take measures in self-defence, the reality is that often small States faced with serious threats lack the means to do so. Small States invariably look to the provisions of the United Nations Charter to secure respect for and preservation of their sovereignty. It is therefore necessary that the protection and security of small States remain a very pertinent issue among the concerns of the United Nations.

The tasks of the organs and bodies of the United Nations are by no means easy. Old tensions have given way to new tensions and concerns, which demand imaginative approaches if solutions are to be found. As we embark upon preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995, let us train our sights on the factors that brought the United Nations into being in the first instance and on what gives the Organization its special worthiness.

The challenge is to attain and maintain long-term global peace and stability and to enhance the prospects for solving global problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian nature. To this end, we as a community of nations must rededicate ourselves to working ever relentlessly and concertedly towards the goal of making our planet a safer, better and happier place in which to live.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Burundi, His Excellency, Mr. Jean-Marie Ngendahayo.

Mr. Ngendahayo (Burundi) *(interpretation from French):* It is an honour and a privilege for me to address the Members of this Organization. In doing so, I convey the greetings of the President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Mr. Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, and of the Government and people of Burundi, as well as their good wishes for every success at this session of the General Assembly.

I should like also to greet and congratulate His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, on his unanimous election to preside over the General Assembly's work at this session.

Your statesmanlike qualities, developed in the course of a long and rich career as a diplomat, augur well for great success at this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Through your impressive election, the General Assembly has once again paid tribute to Africa and to your country, so committed to peace and international cooperation. I assure you that my delegation will give you every support as you strive to fulfil your mandate.

My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau, who, I feel sure, will spare no effort in their practical support for you in the successful accomplishment of your heavy responsibilities.

I should also like warmly to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Samuel Insanally of the Republic of Guyana, who, as President at the forty-eighth session, guided the work of the Assembly masterfully and with exemplary commitment.

Lastly, we pay a warm tribute to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for all the activities he has initiated in order to cope with the many challenges and enormous difficulties facing our Organization today. We believe that these obstacles are not insurmountable provided that there is honest commitment and solidarity on the part of the international community. Thanks to the resolve and perseverance of this Organization, which mobilized the Member States against apartheid, peace and democracy have now triumphed in South Africa. The people and the Government of Burundi have already welcomed this well-deserved victory of the valiant South African people, who have thus resumed their place in the concert of nations.

The current session of the General Assembly is being held at a time of many serious and unexpected events. There have been natural disasters throughout the world: famine, civil war, terrorism and other scourges of modern times, such as religious fundamentalism and the re-emergence of exclusionary movements, associations or political parties, all bearing within them the seeds of division.

A year ago, from this very rostrum, the late President Melchior Ndadaye conveyed to this Assembly a message of peace, friendship, brotherhood and solidarity. This occurred just after the pluralist elections of June 1993, which the entire world had found to be free and transparent. Then, on 21 October 1993, President Ndadaye was assassinated in a rash and senseless act that plunged Burundi into desolation, division and political and ethnic massacres, and sorely tested the hard-won democracy. Since that fateful day, Burundi has suffered a serious political, institutional, social and economic crisis, the repercussions of which are still being felt today. We all recall the unbearable images broadcast by the international media.

Let us further recall that the successor to President Ndadaye, Mr. Cyprien Ntaryamira, died tragically in an airplane accident in Kigali on 6 April 1994, which also took the life of the Rwandese Head of State. Misfortunes never come singly; Burundi had the terrible shock of losing two Presidents in less than six months. This situation has profoundly traumatized the people of Burundi. Some wondered if Burundi would be able to avoid the human cataclysm recently experienced by its neighbour Rwanda. Indeed, the institutional crisis that resulted from the vacuum of power, and the various manifestations of violence that followed, crystallized latent antagonisms, exacerbated latent ethnic divisions and created an atmosphere of suspicion and intolerance that was prejudicial to peace.

Despite the dark picture I have just painted, the people of Burundi has not succumbed to despair. Indeed, the registered political parties and the representatives of civil society have met in a negotiating forum and begun in-depth discussions with a view to finding ways and means of ensuring a swift return to peace, security, trust and socio-economic and political stability in the country.

The lengthy discussions which began after the death of President Cyprien Ntaryamira last April recently led to the signing on 10 September 1994 of a government convention. This document is a basis for the reestablishment of State institutions and organs of State and of various legal and political mechanisms which will restore trust and cooperation between the political partners. The successful outcome of these lengthy negotiations has allowed the people of Burundi to heave a sigh of relief. The people had begun to tire and above all to question the good faith of politicians who, as far as the people could see, were more concerned with their own selfish interests than in peace and the development for one and all.

We take this opportunity to thank the international community for the role it has played in encouraging the people of Burundi to pursue national dialogue and cooperation. We are particularly grateful to the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity for the decisive role they played in ensuring the successful outcome of the negotiations. The Special Representatives of the Secretaries-General of these organizations, Ambassadors Ahmedou Ould Abdallah and Léandre Bassole respectively, participated at every stage of the negotiations we have just concluded. We welcome the progress made together through this preventive diplomacy.

We believe that the choice of a consensus President, Mr. Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, the consensus nomination of a Prime Minister from the opposition, and the formation of a coalition Government are all factors conducive to restoring security and confidence among the various elements of Burundi society and to promoting the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes in the hills. They are also very important in encouraging reconstruction and the economic recovery of the country.

The new national coalition government that arose from the consensus reached in the negotiations between the political partners has, as its main tasks, the reconstruction of the economic and social infrastructures that were partly or totally demolished, the campaign against a general sense of impunity, and the establishment of conditions guaranteeing the safety and peace of all in Burundi. The tasks ahead are enormous and cannot be carried out without the solidarity and assistance of the international community on a bilateral and/or multilateral basis.

We also take this opportunity to recall the request made by the Government of Burundi for the organization of a neutral international inquiry to establish responsibility for the October 1993 putsch and the ensuing massacres. The international community has always stood by us in times of anguish and we feel sure that it will continue to support our efforts by providing emergency special assistance for economic recovery and reconstruction.

We also reiterate our appeal to the United Nations and friendly countries to continue to support the proponents of peace and progress in Burundi and to discourage and condemn all those at home and abroad who may be tempted to use violence to resolve the problems we are experiencing. Today silence means complicity and is criminal.

Lasting solutions to Burundi's political problems can be found only if they are dealt with in a subregional context. For some years now we have been witnessing forced movements of populations following violence perpetrated in some countries of our subregion. These movements, often out of control, are a threat to peace and stability throughout the Great Lakes region.

No one can fail to see that the tragedy of Rwanda has shocked human conscience at the subregional, regional and international levels. It is shameful not only for those behind genocide, or those who have committed it, but also for mankind as a whole, which has not been able to rush to the aid of a people in peril. My country hopes that those guilty of this crime against humanity will be brought to justice and receive the punishment they deserve. We encourage the Government of Rwanda to continue its policy of reconciliation and to do its utmost to ensure that all Rwandese refugees can return to their homeland.

The crisis in Rwanda has had most regrettable consequences for neighbouring States - above all for Burundi, which has ethnic, linguistic and cultural similarities to Rwanda. The Rwandese tragedy has had political, security, economic, humanitarian and environmental consequences. We need not go into details, because the whole world saw on television the human tide flee fighting to take refuge in neighbouring countries, such as Burundi, Tanzania and Zaire. The refugee problem has been acute in our subregion since the 1960s. As the Assembly knows, it is both a humanitarian and a political problem. It causes discord between neighbouring States and has engendered mistrust between them. Some see refugees as an economic and social burden, while others consider them a threat to their security.

For these reasons, we propose that an international conference on peace, stability and development in the African Great Lakes subregion be organized as soon as possible. In the short term, it is a matter of resolving the refugee problem. In the medium term, inter-State mechanisms should be established to safeguard peace, bolster stability and promote socio-economic development. Such a conference could pave the way for the creation of a more viable economic community combining existing organizations, such as the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries and the Kagera River Basin Organization and adapting them better to the realities of our subregion. We believe such a conference would help integrate our States, which share an almost identical history, the same geographical space and, above all, an ability to communicate through common languages. My delegation is willing to make specific proposals on this matter.

Next year the United Nations will celebrate half a century of existence. In 50 years the Organization has accomplished a great many tasks. It has overcome many obstacles, survived the cold war and contributed to the advent of international détente. Its specialized agencies have assisted millions of people in distress. The Organization has always committed itself to actions to maintain international peace and security. It has been able to foster friendly relations between nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination. The United Nations has contributed to dialogue between the peoples and States of the world by encouraging relations of cooperation and solidarity.

None the less, the Organization, like any human enterprise, is far from perfect. Despite efforts to settle armed conflicts, we must note that the brinksmanship and intransigence of certain belligerents diminish hopes for peace.

In Africa, the conflicts in Somalia, Angola and Liberia seem to go on for ever, notwithstanding the efforts of the United Nations to resolve them.

With regard to the crisis in Somalia, we know it was the massive intervention of the Blue Helmets that led the parties involved to the negotiating table. The operation inspired some hope that the people of Somalia would achieve reconciliation. Unfortunately, the conflict continues. Burundi believes the United Nations should continue this operation, using all the means authorized by the Charter. At the same time, we call on the parties involved to settle their differences peacefully and to lend every possible assistance to any mediation effort.

As to Angola, the political and military situation has continued to deteriorate, with an escalation of the fighting and greater mistrust between the belligerents. While welcoming the resumption of the negotiating process between the Government of Angola and UNITA, my State wishes to repeat its appeal for a cessation of the hostilities that have brought so much suffering to the people of Angola.

In Liberia, peace has not yet been restored. There has been delay in full implementation of the Cotonou Agreement - signed on 25 July 1993 by the Interim Government of National Unity, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity - aimed at finding a peaceful settlement to the conflict. The Republic of Burundi pays tribute to the efforts made by ECOWAS and the United Nations to bring about a peaceful settlement of that conflict, which continues to bring such grief to the people of Liberia.

We also support the United Nations peace plan for Western Sahara, which involves a referendum to allow the Saharan people to choose their own destiny.

Africa is today the scene of the largest number of armed conflicts in the world. This political instability means we cannot tackle development in our countries, despite the vast natural resources of our continent. We believe it is high time Africans stopped blaming their misfortunes on outside factors. We firmly believe that Africa must shoulder its responsibilities and define the main lines of its development in accordance with its realities. We must respect our identity while accepting any positive contribution from outside. Burundi has no doubt the time will come when Africa will show its capacity for self-improvement and that it will be able to contribute more to the well-being of mankind. In other words, through the democratic reforms now under way, our continent, which is currently undergoing a period of upheaval, will attain the freedom and development it so desires.

My country welcomes the new era opening up in the Middle East. The peoples of that region are finally going to be able to work together for peace, security and development. We pay tribute to all the countries and institutions that contributed to the mediation efforts and encourage them to continue their diplomatic efforts with a view to a final and irreversible settlement of that conflict, which has lasted far too long.

The situation in the Balkans is also a matter of concern. Work must continue to reconcile the positions of the various parties. War does not resolve problems of coexistence and good-neighborliness between peoples.

On the Korean peninsula, we wish for the voluntary and peaceful reunification of Korea. We also encourage continued negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, in the hope that they will remove all uncertainties with regard to the nuclear problem.

As the Secretary-General pointed out so aptly in "An Agenda for Development", there can be no peace without development. And the 1994 World Human Development Report also states:

> "The absence of peace can indeed hinder development; but without development, peace is threatened."

Development requires international cooperation and assistance from other States. The Charter sets as one of the purposes of the United Nations:

> "to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion".

Problems arising from the maintenance of peace and security and those of a humanitarian character, particularly after the cold war, have led the Organization to extend its operations to the four corners of the Earth. Some observers even fear that development activities will be neglected so long as urgent and immediate needs monopolize the Organization. Some go so far as to say that the discussion on development should be shifted from the General Assembly to other, better equipped institutions.

In Burundi, we consider that development, and the related problems and needs, must also be one of the priorities of the United Nations. There can be no better place than the General Assembly to deal with problems as global and interconnected as poverty, debt, the environment, development assistance and other equally thorny world-wide issues.

On the matter of combating poverty and other social problems, Burundi places great hope in the upcoming World Summit for Social Development, where it intends to be represented at the appropriate level. Our delegation will spare no effort to ensure that the declaration to be adopted at the Copenhagen Summit will correctly reflect the concerns of poor peoples.

The external debt problem of the developing countries is also a crisis, and it must be dealt with more innovatively than it has been in the past. Many strategies have been adopted to resolve the problem. Specific actions have been taken by creditors to restructure commercial debt and in some cases to cancel bilateral debt. But as the Secretary-General has pointed out, to date, the efforts made to lighten the burden of multilateral debt have been far from satisfactory.

The subject of multilateral debt should thus also be carefully studied. My country hopes that the discussion to be held on the agenda item on debt will result in conclusions that can lighten the burden of multilateral debt, particularly with regard to the fragile economies of the least developed countries.

The current situation regarding trade relations is extremely disturbing. The industrialized countries are erecting major barriers to the importation of certain products from developing countries. At the same time, however, the latter countries, under the effect of liberalization policies, are opening wide their doors to foreign competition.

According to the most reliable sources, the damage done to developing countries exceeds the amount of aid allotted to them; however, should the rich countries eliminate all obstacles to the importation of products from the third world, the increase in exports from developing countries would equal twice the aid granted to these countries.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the creation of the World Trade Organization augur well for a more orderly and equitable system of world trade. We maintain the hope that accompanying measures will be taken to avoid the marginalization of developing countries in the multilateral trade system. We are thinking, in particular, of the least developed countries which run the risk of being poor relations within the new World Trade Organization.

For some years, the international community has been aware of the non-sustainable nature of the development and consumption patterns followed thus far, without concern for the protection of the environment.

As the Secretary-General emphasizes in "An Agenda for Development", the environment, like peace, the economy, society and democracy, permeates all aspects of development. In the last few years, the General Assembly has seriously taken up the issues of environment and development. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, in June 1992, gave birth to international legal instruments which, if implemented, will ensure a better environment and more harmonious development for the Earth and its inhabitants. My country, Burundi, has already signed these instruments, and it will soon ratify them.

Burundi has been closely following the discussion that has been under way for some time at the United Nations with a view to reforming and improving the working methods of the Security Council. The ideas put forward are quite diverse. We earnestly hope that this discussion will lead to a solution that will preserve the effectiveness of the Security Council while allowing the developing countries to have their voices heard within that body.

If the democratic reforms desired by our peoples are to be lasting and irreversible, there must be support from the international community, for democracy against a backdrop of social crisis, unemployment, or poverty, could prove illusory. My country places great hope in the United Nations, which alone can contribute to solving mankind's current problems, such as those of population, the environment, economic and social development and health, particularly at a time when certain countries of the world are shaken by endemic illnesses. We cannot pass over in silence the scourge of our time - AIDS. The international community must pool its efforts to suppress this scourge.

We express the hope that the United Nations will continue to pursue the ideals and purposes contained in its Charter. May international relations become more democratic, and a new, more just and equitable, political and economic order emerge.

We also hope that, as this century draws to a close, our Organization will be able to achieve tangible results, particularly in removing the spectres of hunger, poverty and war.

We all aspire to peace, justice and freedom. In our endeavours, we must succeed in achieving them, in order to give future generations the opportunity to live in a better world.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the representative of Sudan, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind representatives that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and 5 minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Yassin (Sudan) *(interpretation from Arabic):* The fact that some delegations have voiced concern over the continuing conflict in the south of Sudan and the suffering of our citizens makes it necessary for us to reply.

It is the Sudan, the principal party which bears the brunt of the continuing war and conflict, that is more concerned over the situation, because the attrition caused by this war depletes the material resources we are very much in need of for our progress and development. This is a war that could not have lasted so long were it not for the direct support the rebels have continued to receive from outside Powers which do not want Sudan to focus on its progress, development and the consolidation of its unity. This problem which was engineered and buried in our soil by colonialism has been a time bomb and a thorn in the side of Sudan since before its independence.

I should add that the present Government, since it came into power in June 1989, has accorded the highest priority to this problem. As early as September 1989, it organized a national peace conference on the issues of peace. The conference made it clear that this was a political problem that arose from discrepancies between the levels of development in different parts of the country.

Not content with this, the Government negotiated with the rebels in Addis Ababa in August 1989, and in Nairobi in November 1989. It then held two rounds of talks in Abuja. The Government did not even wait for the end of the negotiations to lay the groundwork for a solution. It introduced a federalist system wherein the country was divided into 26 states, 10 of which are in the south. The Government established "peace villages" and initiated development projects in the southern states wherein it set up local governments. This led to the return of large numbers of people to those states in the context of the internal peace efforts. Those returnees worked for the local development projects in education, agriculture, and other fields.

In pursuing the negotiating process which it regarded as the best means for the achievement of a peaceful and just settlement to the problem, the Government requested the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD) to ensure continued participation by parties in the negotiations. As an earnest indication of the Government's desire for peace, it suggested the setting up of a more practical mechanism that would ensure continued negotiation in the context of shuttle diplomacy. This was motivated by the desire to speed up negotiations, as a certain slowness was noticed in IGADD's mediation. We are fully convinced that the rebels are not negotiating in real earnest. They have resorted to procrastination, evasion and procedural tactics with the aim of stalling negotiations. Their human rights violations, the kidnapping and conscription of children and killing of relief workers are proof positive that they bear the primary responsibility for the lack of progress in the negotiations.

The statement by the Foreign Minister of sisterly Zambia, who spoke of his country's concern over the general deterioration of human rights in Sudan, is strange indeed. The Ambassador of Sudan, when he presented his credentials to the President of Zambia last week, heard from the President positive remarks concerning Sudan and expressions of keen interest in relations between Sudan and Zambia.

It should be noted that Sudan was the first country the President of Zambia visited, following his election to the presidency. It is regrettable that the Foreign Minister's statement echoed the baseless propaganda campaign waged against my Government. Sudan has kept its doors open to all those who wished to inform themselves as to the situation of human rights in Sudan. All those who visited Sudan found out for themselves that the reason for this campaign was political vindictiveness, and that it rests on nothing but selectivity and bias.

As for the document that has been distributed with the statement of the Chairman of the European Union (EU), it supported the Special Rapporteur whose report contained columny against the religion of Islam which has more than one billion followers the world over. Moreover, this Rapporteur has made himself a self-appointed party to the internal politics of Sudan by participating in all the activities of the opposition in Sudan. This deprives him of impartiality required in an international civil servant who acts on behalf of the international community.

Sudan reaffirms that the refusal to delete the paragraphs attacking Islam will prevent Sudan from cooperating with this Rapporteur.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who wishes to address the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General: Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to speak to the Assembly about the financial situation of the Organization.

Many Member States have addressed this issue during the general debate - often in candid terms.

It has been pointed out that there is no use talking about reshaping the responsibilities of the United Nations unless the resources are there to carry out those responsibilities.

It has been said that the capacity of the United Nations to respond to the demands made on it for peace-keeping depends on the willingness of Member States to contribute the resources needed to fulfil such a role.

And even more directly, it has been pointed out that the United Nations works wonders with what Member States do not pay it, but it simply cannot keep running on exhausted credit.

At the end of August 1994, the Organization had debts exceeding $1.7 billion. This amount includes about $1 billion owed to some 70 Member States for their troop and equipment contributions to peace-keeping missions. At the same time, the United Nations owes $400 million to vendors and suppliers. It owes $325 million for budgetary surpluses in prior years, amounts which should have been returned to the Member States.

In addition, the Organization requires some $400 million each month to meet the costs of regular budget and peace-keeping operations.

Against these overwhelming financial demands, on 31 August of this year the United Nations had $375 million in cash balances. At the same time, Member States owed some $3.2 billion for contributions assessed but not paid - I repeat: $3.2 billion.

In my letter of 21 July of this year to the former President of the General Assembly, I drew attention to the grave situation we face in cash accounts of peace-keeping operations. I outlined a number of emergency measures. While a number of Member States responded positively, the problems continue. Therefore, I once again draw the attention of the General Assembly to this serious situation. Together, we must restore a viable financial basis in order to enable the Organization to continue its work in the service of the Member States.

The causes of our precarious financial situation are clear.

The first cause is late payments by Member States of assessed contributions, for both the regular budget and for peace-keeping operations. While some Member States pay their assessments on time, many others do not. By the end of August, only 56 Member States had paid their regular budget assessment in full, while 70 Member States had made no payment towards their 1994 regular budget assessment. By the end of September, 62 Member States still had made no payment.

The second cause lies in the process of approving peace-keeping budgets and appropriations. Months go by between the date when the Security Council approves a peace-keeping mission and the date when cash to pay for it is first received. Following Security Council approval, detailed budgets for the missions have to be prepared and approved before the required amounts can be assessed. Obviously, more time passes before the assessed contributions are actually paid.

In other words, lateness and delay create an imbalance in the cash position of the Organization. The inflow of cash is far less than the Organization needs to meet its obligations. Because of these late and delayed payments, the Organization has had to delay, in turn, its own payments to Member States. In effect, the Member States which wait for payment from the United Nations are financing the late payment by other Member States. This is not a satisfactory state of affairs.

I am pleased to confirm that in recent weeks a number of Member States have made substantial payments. This has ameliorated the situation. Some payments to troop- and equipment-contributing Member States have been made possible. But amelioration is not a solution. Cash inflow from Member States has been followed by cash outflow to reimburse Member States. Thus, the situation was eased temporarily but not resolved. The Organization's liabilities still far exceed its available cash, and therefore the financial situation continues to be precarious.

The problem is not only the Member States' late or delayed payments; there is a more fundamental problem. The Organization has extremely limited cash reserves. The Working Capital Fund, less than one month's requirement of the regular budget, is today virtually depleted. And at present, there is practically no cash in the peace-keeping reserve fund.

The Organization simply cannot operate effectively under these constraints. We must have a secure capital base with attendant cash reserves. Therefore I ask Members to consider not only the problems caused by late and delayed payments but also the fundamental problem of insufficient reserves. I ask that Members urgently consider these issues.

There is another important element in the Organization's financial structure: the method of assessment. Over the years, Member States have endorsed three basic concepts regarding the Organization's expenses.

One concept is "capacity to pay". Member States with greater per capita resources and ability to pay should bear a greater share of the costs. A second concept - for peace-keeping expenses - is that the permanent members of the Security Council bear a special responsibility and that those with greater resources should bear a greater share of the cost. And the third concept is that realignment of Member States' contributions should be based on objective measures.

Member States may wish to review the practical application of these concepts in the sharing of the Organization's expenses. Each Member State should seriously consider whether the present scale of assessments is equitable. Some have expressed strong doubts. From this review, adjustments to the existing arrangements could emerge. It is important that Member States view the arrangements for sharing the Organization's expenses as fair.

In my report on the work of the Organization (A/49/1), I stressed the urgent need to overcome the critical financial situation of the United Nations. The problem has assumed a proportion which undermines the effectiveness of the Organization as a whole. The ability of the United Nations to perform the functions for which it was created is in danger.

This is no longer simply a financial question; it is an urgent political question.

The ideas which I have described are outlined in greater detail in a document being distributed to delegations as I speak. I offer them as a contribution to the solution of this vital issue. These questions require consideration at the highest political level. It is important that the General Assembly address them directly and effectively this year.

I stand ready, Mr. President, to provide any additional information or assistance you may require on this important subject. I have asked the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management to be at your disposal for that purpose. I have every confidence that, under your guidance, the General Assembly will respond.

I thank the Assembly for providing me with this opportunity to speak. I am sure that together we can summon the vision and the will to solve these urgent problems. At this point in the history of the United Nations, when its potential is greater than ever before, we can do no less than give it the means to realize that potential.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the Secretary-General for the important statement he has just made.

Before bowing to the custom whereby the President of the General Assembly summarizes the statements made during the general debate, I want most sincerely to thank all the speakers who congratulated me and wished me well in carrying out the tasks entrusted to me by the Assembly; I deeply appreciated those kind words. I assure members that I am fully available to work closely with all delegations towards success in the work of this session.

Without fear of error we can already say that the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly will be an exceptional one, given the large number of participants and the high level of the delegations. We have had the honour and privilege of hearing statements by one monarch, 31 presidents, 14 heads of Government, two crown princes, 120 ministers and 11 heads of delegation; they eloquently expressed their countries' perceptions of the world situation today.

Having studied the statements made in the general debate, I wish to make the following comments.

First, I note that the international community in general feels frustrated by unkept promises about building a post-cold-war world of global peace and security.

Admittedly, there has been some tangible progress in the area of democratization and human rights. But the increased number of regional and civil conflicts taking place against a backdrop of ethnic and religious antagonism, and the uncertainty and hesitancy that mark the pace of nuclear disarmament, give us the impression that the world situation today has become more complex because the threats are more diffuse.

In connection with that concern, I welcome the unanimous recognition in the general debate of the virtues of preventive diplomacy and of the need for the financial and military means to carry out effective peace-keeping operations. The universal interest of speakers in this matter confirms the validity of the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" - if such confirmation were necessary.

Secondly, I note with satisfaction that economic and social development held a central place in the majority of statements. In that connection, the Secretary-General's proposed Agenda for Development was rightly seen as an indispensable complement to "An Agenda for Peace", for political instability and civil strife often have their roots in poverty and socio-economic inequality. There was particular emphasis on the need quickly to devise practical machinery for the implementation of the Agenda for Development through action-oriented programmes. There was also emphasis on the need to relaunch what were great chapters in United Nations history - the North-South dialogue and the major United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development - so that the struggle for development can be returned to the heart of United Nations activities.

Furthermore, it was reassuring to note that the international community continues to accord the same priority to Africa, as there is still sustained interest in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. In that connection, the working group on a diversification fund should be reactivated so that it can continue work towards the speedy establishment of such a fund, the importance of which is universally recognized.

Thirdly, I want to highlight the very timely remarks made by many speakers about reform of the United Nations system. Above all, I noted that interest was focused on the enlargement of the Security Council through expansion of its permanent and non-permanent membership. Though such a development would seem inevitable, the diversity and complexity of the solutions put forward make a decision on this question difficult for the time being. In any event, the Assembly's debate on this item in coming days should clarify the details of the various perceptions of this matter.

It would be useful, therefore, for the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council to resume its work as soon as possible and to undertake the necessary consultations; I propose to reappoint the two Vice-Chairmen of that Group. I have no doubt that these efforts will yield results acceptable to all.

In this connection, I can only welcome the forthcoming summit meeting of the Security Council for it is clear that among other important decisions that will be taken by that supreme body, useful information will be made available which will provide more input into the work of the Working Group on the reform of the Security Council.

Turning to my last, but not least, comment, I would recall the interest taken throughout the general debate in the financial situation of the United Nations. Moreover, we have just heard the important statement by the Secretary-General describing all aspects of this issue.

The focus of concern is as follows. Faced with the increase in what the United Nations has to do, particularly in peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance, the available financial resources today are inadequate.

The financial situation of the United Nations today is extremely serious. The difficulties relate, to some extent, to delays in the payment by Member States of their contributions. But it is clear that the question has to be taken up in all its aspects including, *inter alia,* the question of the scale of assessments. I think this is a very important point and one that should be studied with the tranquillity and lucidity that the situation requires. I feel sure that delegations will take up this matter and, as soon as possible, hold appropriate consultations with a view to finding the right answer to this important question.

Still on the financial aspect of affairs, on the question of financing operational activities for development - consideration of which was deferred from the forty-eighth to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly - within the context of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and cultural areas, I am considering asking the Chairman of the Working Group to continue his consultations and I firmly believe that those efforts will be successful.

In conclusion, I would just like to restate what has been said so eloquently here during this very enlightening general debate, namely that, on the eve of its fiftieth anniversary, the United Nations must adapt to the developments in the world today.

This is a task incumbent primarily on us, the Member States, and so we must buckle down to the work without any further delay so that our universal Organization may be able to take up the new challenges of the twenty-first century; and so that we may be able to pursue even more effectively our mission as a unique and irreplaceable instrument in the service of, and for the promotion of, international peace, development and security.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 9?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.29

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

29th Meeting
Thursday, 13 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Essy . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 13

Report of the International Court of Justice (A/49/4)

The President *(interpretation from French):* This morning the Assembly will first turn to the report (A/49/4) of the International Court of Justice covering the period 1 August 1993 to 31 July 1994.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the International Court of Justice?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call upon Mr. Mohammed Bedjaoui, President of the International Court of Justice.

Mr. Bedjaoui (Algeria) (President of the International Court of Justice) *(interpretation from French):* It is a pleasure and honour for me to address the Assembly under the presidency of His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy, and I should like to extend warm congratulations to my friend on his noteworthy election, which delights me for many reasons — first, for the United Nations itself and then for Africa, and lastly, for him personally. His small village in the north-eastern corner of Côte d'Ivoire must surely feel great pride, but so too does another village, the global village that our world has become and whose members are assembled here — in other words, the representatives of the United Nations.

In keeping with a welcome tradition that is now firmly established, the General Assembly has seen fit to devote some of its valuable time to hearing the President of the International Court of Justice on the occasion of its examination of the Court's annual report. I am particularly honoured to be addressing you for the first time in this capacity.

I find this privileged contact between the General Assembly and the Court extremely significant on at least two scores. In the first place, the Court, with its headquarters far from New York, needs to maintain links of consistent and close collaboration with the other principal organs, links that will guarantee the successful accomplishment of its and their tasks and, in addition, ensure the concerted attainment of the aims of the Organization. In the second place, the Assembly, as the only organ in which all the Member States of the Organization are represented, is for that reason a unique forum of expression of the international community that the Court is specifically required to serve.

As the report for 1993-1994 shows, the past year has seen a confirmation of the tendency towards a renewed interest in the Court's jurisdiction that has been evident for some time now. The Court currently has 10 contentious cases on its list. A new case was brought in May of this year and concerns the land and maritime boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria. This is an important matter for the parties, and its submission to the Court bears new witness to the faith of the African continent in international justice. There is one request for

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

an advisory opinion on the Court's General List at the moment; it deals with a request made in September 1993 by the World Health Organization concerning the legality of the use by a State of nuclear weapons in armed conflict. That request, which, as may be imagined, raises some serious issues, has prompted much concern in the international community, judging by the unusual number of States — 40 or so — that have submitted written statements to us. In addition, the Court's jurisdiction has been further extended. Two new declarations, one from Greece and the other from Cameroon, have been deposited with the Secretary-General, and a new multilateral treaty providing for the Court's jurisdiction has been notified to the Court while, at the same time, various reservations to compromissory clauses in certain multilateral treaties have been withdrawn.

These signs, encouraging as they are, must not be allowed to give us a false impression. The real or potential volume of the Court's activities — expressed in quantitative terms: the number of cases pending, declarations subscribed or compromiser clauses in international agreements — does not provide a sufficient answer to the fundamental question, which is not whether or not the Court is extremely busy but whether it is fully occupying its rightful place in the system for the maintenance of peace, as instituted by the Charter.

A quick comparison with the Court's predecessor — the Permanent Court of International Justice — would, moreover, prove somewhat disappointing if confined to the quantitative aspects I have mentioned. In some respects it seems that the Permanent Court was more consistently borne in mind by the States of the time. It may, for instance, be noted that, of the 48 States parties to the Statute of the Court in January 1939, 36 had made a declaration of acceptance of the Court's compulsory jurisdiction. Despite the progress that has been made in recent years, the proportion is much lower in the case of the present Court as, to date, there are only 58 declarations in force — many of them subject to substantial reservations — although there are 186 States parties to the Statute of the Court.

Beyond specific possible explanations of these phenomena, it must be admitted that they look singularly paradoxical in view of the role that each of these Courts was required to play in its distinctive juridical and institutional context. The Permanent Court, which, as will be recalled, was not even an organ of the League of Nations, belonged to a system which, in the context of the time, aimed essentially to do no more than establish peace in order to preserve the status quo. The framers of the Charter, on the other hand, had radically different ambitions, their efforts being directed towards the establishment of an entirely new international society — a society consistently moving towards progress; a society more just, more egalitarian, more wont to show solidarity, more universal; a society all of whose members were to engage in an active and collective endeavour to usher in a full and lasting peace.

It was therefore to be expected that the International Court of Justice — which at San Francisco was expressly intended to be an institution completely distinct from its predecessor, to be fully integrated into the new Organization and to share its original concerns and purposes — would from the outset be associated far more closely and meaningfully with world issues than the Permanent Court had been.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, to be celebrated next year, and that of the Court the following year will no doubt provide suitable occasions for stocktaking and for comprehensive and detailed reflection on this paradox.

None the less, I should like on this occasion to offer the Assembly and, through it, to each of the States of which it is made up an outline of my thinking on this matter and, thereby, to associate myself with the efforts that have already been made in various other settings — the United Nations Decade of International Law; the deliberations of the Special Committee on the Charter; "An Agenda for Peace" — with a view to reinforcing the role of the Court.

Article 7 of the Charter gives the Court the status of a principal organ of the United Nations, and Article 92 makes it the principal judicial organ. As such, the Court is clearly an essential part, not just of the machinery set up by the Charter for the peaceful settlement of disputes, but also of the general system for the maintenance of international peace and security that it introduced.

No provision of the Charter or of the Statute of the Court sets any limits to the Court's action in this respect. In particular, no provision along the lines of Article 12 of the Charter would, on the face of it, preclude a finding by the Court on a dispute being dealt with by the Security Council or by any other organ or agency.

Relations between principal organs are, generally speaking, governed by the principles of speciality, equality, the power of each to determine its own jurisdiction, and coordination. The whole architecture of the United Nations is based on the rule of autonomy for each principal organ, none of which is subordinate to any other, and on the requirement of the concerted pursuit of the common objectives set forth in the Charter. In the absence of any other specific restriction, the Court has always considered the referral of a dispute to more than one principal organ as not in itself constituting any impediment to its performance of its duty.

The Court is the judicial organ of an international community still based upon what has been called a juxtaposition of sovereignties. It suffices, in principle, for two requirements to be met if the Court is to decide a contentious case. On one hand, the parties must have granted the Court jurisdiction to deal with the case; on the other hand, the dispute referred to the Court must be of a legal nature. Moreover, Article 36 of the Charter recognizes that, as a general rule, legal disputes should be submitted to the Court.

It is precisely this concept of a legal dispute, as traditionally opposed to that of a political dispute, that seems to have been misinterpreted and to have been one of the reasons for the underutilization of the Court in contentious cases. It seems that — under the influence, no doubt, of considerations inherited from the period prior to the adoption of the Charter — there has long prevailed among States the feeling that the Court should be seized only of standard disputes deemed to be exclusively legal and, ultimately, perceived as relatively marginal or minor.

I solemnly appeal to States to review their criteria for the seizing of the Court and at no time to disregard the fact that a referral to the Court of no more than a subsidiary legal aspect of a much broader political dispute might well calm the situation at once and change the whole face of the dispute.

In reality, when the Court has been seized of legal issues arising in the wider setting of an eminently political dispute it has never, for that reason, refused to deal with the case — not even in the event of the use of armed force. On the contrary, its jurisprudence clearly points to the decisive contribution that it has made on various occasions to the maintenance or restoration of peace between the parties.

I need only call to mind the Order for the indication of provisional measures that was made on 10 January 1986 by the Chamber of the Court responsible for dealing with the Frontier Dispute between Burkina Faso and Mali. That Order, which was read out in a public sitting on the very day after the Chamber had heard the Parties, at a time when serious incidents had just broken out between their respective armed forces, can serve as an example in many respects. I shall merely note that the Order, which enjoined both Parties strictly to observe the cease-fire, was acted upon while negotiations were still under way in other, essentially regional settings.

To take a more recent example, I would also refer at this juncture to the Judgment delivered by the Court on 3 February 1994 in the case concerning the Territorial Dispute between Libya and Chad. That Judgment put an end to a conflict which, for over 20 years and despite many unavailing attempts to achieve a political settlement, had seriously threatened peace in the region. I wish to pay a special tribute to the Libyan Government and to the Government of Chad, which spared no effort to implement the Court's Judgment without delay and in a spirit of friendly understanding. As early as 4 April 1994, the Parties signed an Agreement concerning the practical modalities for the implementation of the Judgment; on 30 May 1994, they signed a Joint Declaration stating that, under the Agreement, the withdrawal of the Libyan administration and forces from the Aouzou Strip had been effected as of that date.

These two examples amply demonstrate that the Court is perfectly able, for all the modest material resources at its command, swiftly and effectively to fulfil the function entrusted to it by the Charter as an essential component of the system for the maintenance of peace for which the Charter provides. It suffices, for that purpose, that States refer their disputes to it, thus enabling it to play its rightful role to the full. There is no case with a legal dimension which lies *a priori* outside the Court's sphere of competence.

The Court's credibility as a principal organ and as a pre-eminent means of achieving the peaceful settlement of disputes is thus largely in the hands of States. I am deeply convinced that only when the members of the international community have discarded their longstanding prejudices and are, I would venture to say, psychologically ready to have recourse to the Court as naturally as to the political organs, without seeing such action as necessarily any more serious, conflictual or unfriendly, will the Court be able fully to perform its function. Some States may perhaps tend to have misgivings about such judicial settlement on the grounds that, unlike a political settlement, it would be completely outside their control and hence, given the reputed rigidity of legal rules, always liable in the end to turn out less favourably to themselves.

I think I can safely say here that such fears are largely groundless. The Court, by the nature of the law it applies, by the role it fulfils and by its composition, is better able than any other judicial institution to withstand blind applications of the law. While being sufficiently precise to offer those who come before it all the legal security to which they legitimately aspire, international law remains at the same time and in essence a flexible and open law. The Court itself, incidentally, has on several occasions explained that the fact of its deciding in law by no means rules out — quite the contrary — due regard for equity *infra legem* or, in other words, "that form of equity which constitutes a method of interpretation of the law in force, and is one of its attributes". Moreover, as we know, there are specific areas of international law, such as the law of the sea, where reference is constantly made to equitable principles. As a body integrated into the system for the maintenance of peace that was established under the Charter, the Court never loses sight of that ultimate objective.

Thus, the important step recently taken by the Court towards the Parties in the case concerning Maritime Delimitation and Territorial Questions between Qatar and Bahrain provides indisputable evidence of the dynamic and responsible judicial policy applied by the Court and prompted by its constant concern to hear and determine cases in the interest of peace. Furthermore, the composition of the Court as a "World Court" which must, in accordance with Article 9 of its Statute, give an equitable representation to the main forms of civilization and the principal legal systems of the world, taken together with its working methods and, in particular, the collegiate nature of the Court, provide firm guarantees of its perfect understanding of the concerns of all States. The Court is made up of equal, independent and impartial judges; there is no right of veto and no political patronage at the Court. The Court takes its decisions on the basis of law, following a most minute and meticulous examination of each case, without failing to take account of the meta-juridical factors, the expectations of the Parties and the imperative requirements of justice and peace. Indeed, many a smaller or weaker State has obtained through the Court what it would no doubt never have been able to secure by other means.

There can be no doubt, of course, that each method of peaceful settlement has its distinctive virtues, not only from an intrinsic point of view but also in the light of each particular situation. Accordingly, while the Charter makes it obligatory for States to settle their differences by peaceful means, it refrains from laying down a specific mode of settlement. That being so, it could clearly be no part of my intention to advocate the substitution of judicial settlement for any other course of action, but only to remove certain ambiguities surrounding it.

The considerations I have just advanced with essential reference to the contentious procedure before the Court apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the advisory procedure, the importance of which has long been underestimated. Only of late has there been a real awareness of the potential impact that the Advisory Opinions of the Court can, either directly or indirectly, have upon the maintenance of peace. A relevant legal question put in a timely manner to the Court may, by the answer it elicits or indeed of itself, to prove to be an effective tool of preventive diplomacy or contribute, even substantially, to the settlement of a dispute that has already arisen. Many an Advisory Opinion has in the past had diplomatic and political implications that were by no means inconsiderable. Thus, while we are all profoundly gratified to have among us in this Assembly the representatives of the young State of Namibia, I am particularly happy and proud to be able to affirm that, through its Advisory Opinions in the South West Africa cases, the Court made its contribution to the eagerly awaited accession of that State to independence.

There are also many advisory opinions that have had a decisive influence on the progress made in international law since the end of the Second World War. By way of example, one has only to recall the advisory opinion — revolutionary in the legal context of the time — that the Court handed down in 1949 on the objective international personality of the United Nations and its capacity to ask for reparations.

However, little advantage is taken of the system of advisory opinions today, perhaps even less than is taken of the Court's contentious jurisdiction, if one considers the benefits the system consistently makes available to international organizations, the flexibility of its implementation and its essentially non-binding character.

I am pleased to observe in passing that the General Assembly has been by far the body most inclined to refer its queries to the Court. Chances are good that a keener perception by the international community, both of the nature of the mission entrusted to the Court and of the potential of its advisory procedure, will soon give fresh impetus to recourse to the advisory function, which is so fundamental for an international community aspiring to be governed by the primacy of law.

As I see it, the essential thing for the Court's immediate future is therefore an affirmation, in seats of government, of the political will to take a fresh and more realistic look at the Court. That, it seems to me, is the very modest price that has to be paid if the Court is to resume the place in world affairs that the framers of the Charter originally intended it to occupy.

I do not think I need to dwell on the few criticisms customarily levelled at the Court, which may have made some Governments more reluctant to approach it, as their groundlessness is nowadays widely acknowledged. One such criticism is the purported slowness of the Court's proceedings. It is true it takes an average of two years for the Court to settle a case. There are limits, however, to what the Court can do when sovereign States submitting important matters to it seek, quite understandably, to give the best chance to their arguments by asking permission to submit several written pleadings or to be given sufficient time to present their cases, first in writing and later orally. In fact, once the Court begins its deliberations, things generally move very fast: it is usually only a few months, or even weeks, between the end of oral proceedings and the rendering of the Court's Judgment.

The Assembly will certainly recall the speed with which the Court responded to the Assembly's request for an advisory opinion concerning the applicability of the obligation to arbitrate under section 21 of the United Nations Headquarters Agreement of 26 June 1947. The public hearings on that case ended on 12 April 1988, and the Court's advisory opinion, a rather long and complex one, was rendered just 14 days later, on 26 April. As a prerequisite of the sound administration of justice, expeditiousness is therefore dependent essentially on the will, not of the Court, but of those resorting to it.

The second criticism to which I was referring concerns the financial cost of the Court's proceedings. For the States Members of the United Nations that contribute to its budget, access to the Court is free of charge. The cornerstone of any judicial proceedings is the cardinal principle of equality of the parties, and this principle underlies all the procedural provisions of the Court's Statute and Rules.

None the less, we all understand that this formal equality, crucial though it is, does not suffice to allay the misgivings of the least-privileged States. True justice requires that all be equal before the judge, not just *de jure* but also de facto. For this reason I must pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his noteworthy initiative resulting in the establishment of a special trust fund in 1989 designed to help those States that cannot afford the expense of referring a dispute to the International Court of Justice for settlement.

May the generous contributors to the fund be warmly thanked in the name of international justice. Their exemplary gesture bears heartening witness to a growing solidarity within the international community. I invite all those able to do so to join them, in the same spirit, in order to increase the fund's resources. I also invite all those in need of assistance from the fund to take full advantage of its resources. Such a system of judicial cooperative action would, if confirmed and extended, be an unquestionable sign of great maturity on the part of the community of States.

In recent years international relations have been marked by upheavals as numerous and significant as they have been unexpected. If the United Nations wishes to continue the successful pursuit of its noble and difficult mission, it is essential that it show itself to be capable of adapting swiftly and effectively to new circumstances. Various ideas have already been advanced in this respect. Needless to say, they will have to include the functions of the Court.

States, traditionally qualified as "primary" or "necessary" subjects of the international legal order, which are today the only entities with access to the Court's contentious jurisdiction, are no longer the only actors in international relations or the only interlocutors on matters of peace-keeping, as they were in the 1920s. International affairs show us every day that greater allowance also has to be made at this level for other entities. By the same token, access to the Court's advisory jurisdiction may henceforth appear unduly restricted if one imagines the enormous potential of the advisory function and of the existing demand for it. One might envisage the possibility, not only that other entities of the Organization, in particular the Secretary-General, might be able to request advisory opinions of the Court, but also that that option might be extended when appropriate to third organizations that are not part of the United Nations system but that make an important contribution to the maintenance of peace at, for example, the regional level.

These are all questions of great importance for the future of the Court and for world peace. They need to be examined very closely in the near future, and I hope to be able to speak to the General Assembly about them again some day.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the President of the International Court of Justice.

Mr. Lamamra(Algeria) *(interpretationfromFrench):* It is a great privilege for me to speak here on the occasion of our consideration of the annual report of the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice, whose lofty responsibility it is to settle, in accordance with international law, disputes brought to it in accordance with international law, and whose jurisprudence is a major source of the development of international law.

Before making specific comments on the report, I wish to discharge the pleasant duty of paying a well-deserved tribute to the President of the International Court of Justice, Mr. Mohammed Bedjaoui, and praise his great professional, moral and human qualities. For national and personal reasons, I welcome the presence in the Assembly of President Bedjaoui, and I wish to express warm congratulations to him, on behalf of the Algerian delegation and on my own behalf, on his brilliant election to the presidency of the International Court of Justice. Our warm congratulations also go to the Vice-President, Mr. Stephen Schwebel, who, thanks to his great integrity and outstanding legal competence, will together with President Bedjaoui doubtless constitute a driving force in strengthening the moral authority of the United Nations and the rule of law in international relations.

Finally, I cannot fail to welcome the participation in the Court of the three new judges elected during the previous session of the General Assembly by the Assembly and the Security Council: Mr. Abdul Koroma, Mr. Carl-August Fleischhauer and Mr. Shi Jiuyong respectively.

In his characteristically clear and eloquent statement, Mr. Bedjaoui just informed us of the increasing activities of the Court. My delegation is pleased at the confirmation of this tendency, which was already noticeable these past few years, since respect for international law, one of the prime components of which is growing recourse to the International Court of Justice, must be a priority for the international community and the States that comprise it. Thus it is only natural that States should be making increasingly frequent use of the Court in contentious matters. This is a tangible indication of States' growing confidence in the Court and of their desire to settle disputes by peaceful means, by having more systematic recourse to the procedures provided for in the United Nations Charter and in other international instruments. In that respect, it would be highly desirable to see the provisions of Article 36, paragraph 3, of the Charter systematically applied; these provisions, I would recall, provide that:

> "In making recommendations under this Article the Security Council should also take into consideration that legal disputes should as a general rule be referred by the parties to the International Court of Justice ...".

The relevance of such an approach is illustrated most graphically in the Court's report of the Judgment in the case Territorial Dispute between the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Chad, two fraternal African countries. In that Judgment, the Court not only definitively settle a twenty-year-old dispute to the satisfaction of both parties, which formally committed themselves to carry out, and did so, the Court ruling but also provided a new and particularly edifying example of the principle of the integrity of borders inherited by African countries at the time of their accession to independence, a principle which, as everyone knows, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) solemnly adopted and proclaimed in its first Summit of OAU Heads of State in July 1964. I would like to say how pleased Algeria is at the positive outcome of this Chadian-Libyan territorial dispute over the Aouzou Strip and how happy we are at the outstanding role played by the Court in this case.

Regarding consultative matters, we cannot but note that, as President Bedjaoui stated, the possibilities offered by the Court remain undeniably underutilized. This is all the more regrettable, since the legal framework exists as much for certain primary organs of the United Nations as for certain other international organizations, which are entitled to request advisory opinions of the Court on legal questions. In the period covered by the Court's report, only the World Health Organization deemed it useful to request an advisory opinion on the question of whether the use of nuclear weapons by a State is in keeping with international law.

Despite the Court's growing activities, there is no question that it is not sufficiently utilized, notably in consultative matters, and particularly by the other competent principal bodies of the United Nations, namely the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The profound changes that have occurred in recent years on the international scene have resulted in a broad debate on the role and place of the United Nations. Fortunately, this discussion has not taken refuge behind theoretical or academic speculation; rather, it has given rise to a vast movement — although relatively limited for the time being — to revitalize and restructure the Organization's organs in the economic, social and related fields, as well as the work of the General Assembly, and to review the composition and functioning of the Security Council. It would only be natural and appropriate for the International Court of Justice to in turn be connected with and involved in this growing but irreversible trend, a trend that flows logically within the new international configuration resulting from the end of the cold war.

The necessary revitalization of the activities of the International Court of Justice should naturally flow from the historical logic of adapting to new international realities, and be translated into a new appreciation of the role and the place of the Court as an integral part of the United Nations.

Along these lines, I should emphasize that the movement — already longstanding but which has taken a more promising turn since last year — towards expanding the composition of the Security Council, something which we are all aware will require some time as well as a revision of the Charter, should in no way overlook the potential and resources of the International Court of Justice. Indeed, the potentially substantial input of the Court should be neither neglected nor underestimated. The same goes for requests for advisory opinions which the organs entitled to do so might more frequently seek. The same also goes for the monitoring of constitutionality, which the Court might engage in with respect to the actions of the other principal organs of the United Nations, within a framework of necessary respect for their respective functions.

This would apply most particularly, but not exclusively, to Security Council decisions, whose legal foundations and motivations would be clearer to all States Members of the Organization. This could only result in a stricter and sounder application of the provisions of Article 24. The Security Council itself would be strengthened, in that it would be acting completely on behalf of the States Members of the Organization and in absolute conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as expressly provided for in Article 24 of the Charter, to which I referred a moment ago.

In embarking resolutely and collectively on this process of revitalizing the activities of the International Court of Justice, we would be making a contribution to achieving one of the four main objectives of the United Nations Decade for International Law, namely,

> "To promote means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice" *(resolution 48/30, second preambular paragraph, (b))*.

The small number of statements in this debate on the annual report of the International Court of Justice can be interpreted as a sign of Member States' respect for the Court and as tacit consent for what it has done. But the Court no doubt also needs the encouragement of Member States, both from the political point of view and the point of view of making available to it the human and material resources it needs to carry out its noble task. The Algerian delegation assures the President of the Court and his distinguished colleagues in this Hall of its full support on both scores.

Mr. Flores Olea (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Mohammed Bedjaoui for his excellent presentation today to the General Assembly of the report on the work of the International Court of Justice. We should like to express particular appreciation for the format and the calibre of his report this morning. The fact that he shared with the General Assembly his evaluation and analysis of the all-important work of the Court and commented on the Court's recommendations and proposals cannot but greatly enrich the work of this session.

At the same time, we wish to affirm our deep gratitude for the work done by Judges Eduardo Jiménez de Aréchaga, José María Ruda and Nikolai Tarassov, all of whom have died within the past year. Their contributions to the Court and to the development of international law helped enhance the stature of the highest international judicial organ.

International coexistence based on respect for the fundamental norms of law and justice is the best guarantee of peace. Recognizing this, the States that met at the San Francisco Conference set as one of their primary objectives for the future United Nations the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the principles of law and justice, and provided its Members with an impartial and independent mechanism that would be entrusted with resolving the disputes that might arise in the course of their mutual relations. That organ is the International Court of Justice.

Unfortunately, international law is not in and of itself a guarantee of peace; it must be accompanied by the political will of States to pledge themselves to use the mechanisms and to adhere to the norms that the law provides for avoiding or resolving conflicts.

Mexico is among the States that have made a specific declaration recognizing the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 5 of Article 36 of its Statute. Such a declaration by other Members of the United Nations, and especially those that have major responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is highly desirable; that would make clearer their confidence in and respect for the Court.

The opportunity that Article 15, paragraph 2 of the Charter of the United Nations gives to Members of the General Assembly to receive the report of the highest judicial organ of the Organization is not, and must not be seen as, a mere formality. On the contrary, the presentation of the report is the best opportunity for the Court to inform the Members of the United Nations of its progress in the interpretation and the development of the norms of international law. It is also an opportunity for States to feel more closely involved in the judicial work of, and the creation of law by, this organ.

We quite understand that by its very nature the International Court of Justice is an independent organ, and that its rulings are not and must not be called into question in any way. This means that the purpose of the present exercise should be to disseminate information to States on the substantive work done by the Court during the past year so that we can make an objective and direct assessment of the cases that are brought before the Court. This undoubtedly can have an impact on United Nations Members' perception of the Court, and it can contribute to broadening communication and cooperation between the principal organs of the United Nations.

We therefore invite the members of the General Assembly and the members of the Court themselves to reflect on the importance of these presentations of report, for they serve as a real means of revitalizing the role and authority of the International Court of Justice.

Abiding by the law and applying it are, as we are all aware, essential elements in present-day international relations.

Mr. Azwai (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: My country's delegation would like to associate itself with other delegations in welcoming Mr. Mohammed Bedjaoui, President of the International Court of Justice, and in congratulating him on his detailed introduction of the report of the Court to this session. This report once again reflects the increasing confidence by the international community in the International Court of Justice.

The Charter of the United Nations, in its first Article, calls for the settlement of disputes between States in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. It is a source of satisfaction to us that this approach has become one of the constants of the policies pursued by most United Nations Members. This is evident in the record and the registry of the International Court of Justice. Many States have chosen to have recourse to the Court to settle their differences and disputes and have accepted and implemented the Court's rulings. My country is one such State.

Over the last three decades, the Court has considered three cases to which the Jamahiriya was a party. The latest was the ruling by the Court on the dispute over the Aouzou Strip. This ruling is contained in sub-section 3 of the part three of the report of the Court, which is before the Assembly in document A/49/4. Libya accepted the ruling, although it was not in its favour, and implemented it in the presence of the United Nations and under its supervision, as shown in document S/1994/657. This position was appreciated by the Secretary-General, as stated in his report (S/1994/672), and also by the Security Council, as contained in its resolution 926 (1994).

We all have welcomed the easing of tensions in international relations. The coming period will witness attempts by the international community to build a new world order. If this order is to become permanent and fair, it should be based, in the view of my country, on the rule of law and respect for international law. In this context, the International Court of Justice has a central role to play. For such a role to be effective, it is essential to demonstrate more commitment to the role of the Court and to have recourse to it more often in the settlement of disputes. It is equally important also to accept the Court's rulings — past and future — on each and every dispute referred to it by the parties concerned. This applies specially to the States that bear the greater responsibility within the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. Those States, whenever they are parties to disputes, must demonstrate their commitment to international law and respect of its rules by accepting and implementing the Court's rulings. Indeed, some of those States still refuse to have recourse to the Court or to implement its rulings.

The Secretary-General, in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace", states that greater reliance on the International Court of Justice would be an important contribution to United Nations peacemaking. My country agrees with this assessment and believes that this trend should be strengthened and enhanced. It also believes that States should be encouraged to have recourse to the Court and to make use of its potential to settle their disputes before taking them to other United Nations organs such as the Security Council, as has happened in some cases. One example is the dispute between my country and France, Britain and the United States of America which the Jamahiriya has referred to the International Court of Justice.

Although the dispute is still before the Court, the three States resorted to the Security Council and pushed it to adopt certain resolutions pertaining to the dispute without even waiting for the Court's decision. This is exactly what we do not want.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to thank the President of the International Court of Justice, Judge Bedjaoui, and his colleagues who are present today. I should also like to thank all the Judges who are with Judge Bedjaoui in this Hall for the excellent work they are doing in the Court.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 13?

It was so decided.

Organization of work

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to remind Member States that the deadline for submission, in writing, of their views on Programme 6 of the medium-term plan, Elimination of apartheid, contained in document A/49/6, Programme 6, is Wednesday, 26 October. This will allow sufficient time for transmission to the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 33

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

The President *(interpretation from French):* Members will recall that at its 104th meeting, held on 14 September 1994, the General Assembly adopted decision 48/498, by which the General Assembly decided

> "that the Open-ended Working Group [on the Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council] should continue its work, taking into account, *inter alia*, the views expressed at the forty-ninth session, and submit a report to the General Assembly before the end of that session."

I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at noon.

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list as soon as possible.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): I wish to convey my delegation's deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, and to his two Vice-Chairmen for their fine efforts in steering the work of the Working Group during the last session of the General Assembly. My delegation welcomes the decision that the Working Group should continue its work during this session and submit a report to the General

Assembly before the end of the session. We look forward, Mr. President, to continuing our participation in the deliberations of the Working Group under your able stewardship.

Malaysia's views on this item have already been articulated: at the last General Assembly session, at meetings of the Open-ended Working Group, and recently by our Deputy Prime Minister in his address on 5 October during the general debate. Our views were also reflected in the Secretary-General's report, document A/48/264 of 20 July 1993. Given the importance of this issue, we feel, however, that it is necessary today to reiterate some of the points raised earlier by our delegation.

The current exercise pertaining to the reform of the Security Council should not be squandered if we want the United Nations to live up to its full potential as envisaged in the Charter. We should not allow any unpersuasive claims by some major Powers and others to stand in the way of timely and necessary change, change that would make the Security Council more representative, effective, transparent, democratic and accountable. These changes are vital in our collective efforts to enhance the legitimacy and credibility of the Security Council. A reformed Security Council should serve the interests of all nations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation is convinced that a mere change in the composition of the Security Council would not be sufficient to ensure broad support for Council decisions without specific changes in the Council's working methods. We have repeatedly said that expansion without reform of the Council's working methods would be meaningless and undeserving of the interest of the entire membership of the United Nations. On the other hand, reform of the Council, even without expansion, would have some positive effect on the effectiveness, credibility and legitimacy of the Security Council.

Any reform which merely facilitates enlargement, specifically through the increase of permanent membership by one or two or even three seats, to the exclusion of other equally important issues is certainly not acceptable to us. My delegation is not convinced that merely adding two or more permanent members to cushion the financial obligations of some veto-wielding Powers would really reform the Security Council. Furthermore, we have always questioned the permanent status of some members of the Security Council, which is not consistent with the principles of the sovereign equality of States and democracy. We cannot accept a situation in which five members of the Security Council remain more powerful than the whole membership of the United Nations.

From the discussions in the Open-ended Working Group it is clear that there is a wide convergence of views over the need to improve the working methods and procedures of the Security Council in order to enhance its efficiency. While recognizing that there have been some positive steps towards that end, my delegation is of the view that more could, and indeed should, be done by the Security Council. In this regard, the constructive proposals agreed to by the Non-Aligned Movement at its ministerial meeting held in Cairo from 31 May to 3 June 1994 should be given serious consideration with a view to their early adoption.

There is an urgent need to improve the relationship of the Council with the General Assembly and with non-members of the Security Council. Decisions of the General Assembly must be made binding on the Council, particularly those commanding overwhelming support. At the same time, taking into account Article 29 of the Charter, the Council must ensure that it provides for effective interaction with the larger membership. For instance, in the case of peace-keeping operations, the Council, which takes decisions on peace-keeping matters, must create institutional mechanisms for consultation with the troop contributors. After all, Article 44 of the Charter provides for the participation of troop-contributing countries not members of the Council in the decisions of the Council concerning employment of contingents of those Members' armed forces.

On the question of enlargement of the Security Council's membership, we agree that the increase should be large enough to represent all 184 Members effectively. The current distortion in the distribution of seats in the Security Council to the benefit of mostly European and other Western countries should be rectified as a matter of priority. Since the Security Council derives its moral legitimacy from its balanced representative character, it is necessary that its future composition be reflective of the current realities. My delegation is prepared to consider the various models of ratio increase proposed by some delegations with a view to finding a workable and acceptable ratio. While recognizing the need to have an outer limit, we would like to stress that our debate on the need to ensure equitable representation should not be subsumed in our preoccupation with numbers. We should not be too obsessed with the numbers game. Any formula that would ensure the greatest degree of representation and equity should be acceptable to us.

It is the view of my delegation that the best possible option to address the problem of both over-representation and the absence of equitable representation in the Security Council is to increase the number of seats for non-permanent members. This is necessary and timely in the light of the current realities and in keeping with the significant increase in the membership of the United Nations to 184.

The expansion of the Security Council should be seen from the regional perspective so as to ensure proper regional representation, in terms of both quantitative and qualitative aspects. It is the view of my delegation that regional representation should not be on the basis of the biggest and the most powerful in a given region, but, more importantly, on the basis of the dynamics operating in the region and the arrangements developed there. If regional organizations provide the interlocking network for globalism, clearly the permanent interests of regions must be given pre-eminence.

Another equally important aspect that we are seeking in the reform exercise is the elimination of the veto. My delegation has always questioned the continuing relevance of the veto in the light of some unhealthy trends in the Security Council, where only one Power or group of Powers increasingly appears to be taking control of decision-making. In this regard, my delegation would like to reiterate that the veto should be abolished for the following reasons:

First, the victorious Powers of 1945, which accorded themselves special privileges as permanent members, are no longer the exclusive pre-eminent Powers, as new centres of power have since emerged. Therefore, in our view, the veto is obsolete in the context of current realities.

Secondly, the right of veto undermines the principle of the sovereign equality of States as provided for in the Charter.

Thirdly, the veto undermines the concept of collective security of States as enshrined in the Charter. As we indicated in our submission to the Secretary-General,

> "no country, however powerful, should arbitrarily stand in the path of collective needs as determined by the general membership of the United Nations". *(A/48/264, p. 59)*

Fourthly, the veto power allows the permanent members to protect or shield any States they desire from the governance of the Security Council. An assessment of utilization of the veto would indicate that it is being used in support of partisan and national interests rather that in defence of issues and principles and in the interests of the international community in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Fifthly, the threat of the use of the veto is often used even to prevent or delay a request for debate intended to allow the general membership to make its pronouncements on critical issues relating to international peace and security.

Finally, the veto marginalizes the role of the non-permanent members.

Mr. Yassin (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My delegation is fully aware that no permanent member will at present accept a Charter amendment that results in the abolition of the veto power. In this regard, my delegation shares the views of those delegations that have proposed restrictions on the application of that power. The details of our proposal will be raised when the Working Group convenes.

In their statements during the general debate most delegations, including my own, spoke of the need to reform the Security Council. A number of interesting proposals advanced during the general debate merit our serious consideration. My delegation will study all those proposals carefully.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate that any exercise relating to the reform of the Security Council should be carried out in a comprehensive manner and should include not only the question of membership, but also the veto power and voting, working methods of the Security Council and the relationship between the Council and other organs of the United Nations. It is our hope that the outcome of this exercise will enhance the legitimacy, representativeness and effectiveness of the Security Council.

Mr. Chew (Singapore): Allow me first to congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his unanimous election. I am confident that under his leadership the Assembly will achieve its objectives. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Essy's predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for his guidance in making the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly a success. In his capacity as Chairman of the Open-ended Working

Group established to consider this item by resolution 48/26, Ambassador Insanally brought greater focus and clarity to the issues which have to be addressed before we can arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

The item we are considering today, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", was introduced 15 years ago at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly. In the intervening years it languished. With the end of the cold war, the Security Council began to achieve much of its envisaged role in the maintenance of international peace and security. This, together with the marked increase in United Nations membership, led to renewed calls for the Security Council to be more representative of the Organization as a whole, for improvements in its relationship with other organs of the United Nations, and for improvements in its working methods.

At the forty-eighth session, last year, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore devoted his entire statement in the general debate to the question of the expansion of the Security Council. The purpose of the Singapore statement was to stimulate discussions on this important issue with a view to making progress. As stated by my Foreign Minister:

> "... there is no alternative but gradually to shape a consensus through a patient process of debate and discussion". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 18th meeting, p. 18)*

We are pleased that the process of debate and discussion has since taken off. Progress has been made in the Open-ended Working Group as delegations have begun to conduct substantive discussions of the issues. However, for a consensus to emerge more needs to be done. This is especially so if, as some representatives have advocated, we are to achieve consensus before the end of the fiftieth session.

It is our view that the following will need to be done to shape a consensus.

First, the issues of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council must become priority issues for Governments. Unless capitals become seized of these issues and have clear visions of the role of the United Nations in the next 50 years, we will not achieve much here in New York. At the moment, many of the views expressed in the Open-ended Working Group tend to be general in nature and to be reiterations of known positions.

Secondly, the implications of those specific proposals thrown out during the discussions in the Open-ended Working Group and in the recently concluded general debate must be critically examined. These proposals have raised a number of questions which will need to be fully addressed if progress is to be made.

Thirdly, in any discussion of the question of expansion of the Council, there will have to be serious and concerted examination of objective criteria for new permanent members. In his statement my Minister called for the formulation of:

> "... agreed objective criteria for the expansion of the Security Council, especially its permanent members". *(ibid.)*

Some countries view the establishment of objective criteria to be unnecessary. They claim that eventually political considerations will determine who the new permanent members will be. Others have asked: what should constitute such objective criteria? We have no doubt that in the final analysis political considerations will play a part in our decisions. However, we will still need to have objective criteria to guide our political decisions. As to what should constitute objective criteria, we need only look at the role of the Security Council as defined in the United Nations Charter to answer this question. The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The objective criteria must therefore be intimately linked to the ability of countries to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Progress on this item will be hesitant at best unless there is political will to push ahead. We cannot achieve consensus in the Working Group unless there is a genuine desire on the part of Member States to negotiate seriously and to make the necessary compromises. But we should also deliberate carefully, because the decisions taken on this important issue will have a profound impact on the ability of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole to maintain international peace and security in the decades ahead. My delegation will do its utmost to make constructive contributions to the process of consensus-building on this important item.

Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda): This is the first time I have had the opportunity to address the Assembly since Mr. Amara Essy was elected President; let me therefore congratulate him warmly on behalf of the Antigua and Barbuda delegation. His election is a tribute to his experience and a testimony to his outstanding abilities. My delegation is confident that under his able stewardship the Assembly will succeed in advancing the noble aims and objectives of the Charter.

When my Prime Minister addressed this deliberative body a week ago, he said the following:

> "No State or group of States can proclaim the overarching importance of democracy, nor can any nation or group of States claim to intervene in another State in the interest of upholding democracy, if that nation or group of States is unwilling to democratize the Security Council itself. ... The time has come for equity for all nations — large and small — in the membership of the Council." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th Meeting, p. 19)*

In the short time allotted each delegation in this debate, Antigua and Barbuda would wish to expand on these remarks and to make pellucid its position on Security Council reform, without necessarily repeating, although abiding by, the statements my delegation made during debates at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

My delegation regards as established wisdom the view that Security Council decision-making will be the most significant factor in fashioning a new world order in the post-cold-war world. My delegation also regards as established wisdom the view that small States require the protection offered by the Security Council much more than do large States. As a small State, Antigua and Barbuda regards adherence to international law as a cardinal rule from which no State should ever deviate; given their relative inability to defend themselves militarily, small States must depend on the strictures of international law to deter external aggression.

How then does a small and militarily weak State, that does not produce oil and that dwells on the periphery of the economic system, compel the attention of the Security Council at a time of crisis? It is my delegation's view that to succeed in receiving so much as an attentive glance there must be equity for all nations — large and small — in the membership of the Security Council.

In this context, "equity" means that decision-making within the Security Council must take into account the views of small States. Given the present configuration of the Security Council, small States must be seated at the Council table if it is to be said that their views count and that equity prevails. The present debate seems to be reduced to the question whether two additional large and wealthy States are to realize their ambition of being included in the roster of the permanent membership of the Council. Such a debate excludes the principle of equity for all nations, large and small.

The discussion will thus appear unnecessary and wasteful if the only criterion for membership remains the economic wealth of aspirant States. That approach harks back to the days of colonial rule in Antigua and Barbuda when the privilege of offering oneself as a candidate for parliament was limited to those who possessed valuable property; that inequity was outlawed in 1951 in my small country when adult suffrage became the law.

In 1945, six years before that historic event, the United Nations was created. Eight months from today, the United Nations will mark 50 years since the signing of the Charter. The United Nations Charter proclaims that its Members are determined

> "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights ... in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small".

But can its large and powerful Members truly proclaim that they are abiding by its Charter if small nations are excluded by deliberate design from the halls of decision-making? Can its large Members truly proclaim that they are abiding by its Charter when the possession of wealth appears to be the only criterion for inclusion in Security Council membership and decision-making?

There is an urgent need for large and wealthy States to engage in meaningful dialogue with small and poor States in the Councils of this parliament of parliaments. Small and poor States will not depend upon goodwill; the United Nations Charter obliges Member States to sit in counsel with those reliant upon the Council's decision-making powers.

As we enter the twenty-first century, the United Nations will become more important, not less; the obligation of history and the legacy of those who struggled to make membership within the United Nations a reality for small and poor nations, like mine, imposes on my generation a commitment to stand guard against the privilege which prevailed in the age of its founding. That is a charge we shall never surrender.

We continue to abide by our earlier proposals for equitable geographical representation on an enlarged Security Council along the following lines: within the African States, one permanent member and six non-permanent members; for the Asian States, two permanent members and three non-permanent members; for the Eastern European States, one permanent member and two non-permanent members; for the Latin American and Caribbean States, one permanent member and three non-permanent members; for the Western European and Other States, three permanent members and three non-permanent members.

This arrangement, in our view, encompasses equity for all nations, large and small. Our ambition, as our Prime Minister has declared, is after all to democratize the Security Council.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): Indonesia's position on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council was clearly stated by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas, during the general debate earlier this month. It is therefore not the intention of the Indonesian delegation to express itself on the matter now.

It is a distinct honour and privilege for me to speak on behalf of the non-aligned countries on the agenda item before us.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Ambassador Insanally of Guyana, President of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, who served ably as Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. Our commendations also go to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Chew Tai Soo of Singapore.

Recent developments in the global landscape have placed the Security Council in a position of increasing importance with ramifications for the work of the Organization and beyond. Numerous circumstances have also contributed to an unprecedented number of activities being undertaken by this body. From dealing with conflict situations in various parts of the world that threaten peace and security, to the expansion of peace-keeping activities, the Council has had an active agenda and its capacity to respond has, at times, been adversely affected. The new cooperative spirit prevailing among its members has allowed them to take a number of unanimous positions on some of the most critical and complex issues, while we are also cognizant of the fact that it has failed to address effectively certain other issues. The Council has thus reached a critical turning-point in its history and members look forward to a more effective role now that the obstacles which paralysed it for so long have been removed.

It is in this light that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries views the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council. It is pertinent to recall that endeavours to achieve this objective initiated a decade and a half ago have lagged behind and somehow remained beyond the purview of a broad and far-reaching process of reform and revitalization of the United Nations itself. In 1946, the United Nations had 51 Members, six of which were non-permanent members of the Security Council. In 1965, when the membership had grown to 113, there was a corresponding increase in the non-permanent members to 10. But despite the fact that more than a quarter century has elapsed while the membership has increased to 184, there has been no further increase in the Council's membership.

The tenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Jakarta in September 1992, expressed the position of the Movement on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council as contained in the Final Documents, issued as document A/47/675 of 18 November 1992. Likewise, at the eleventh Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Cairo in June of this year, the Movement stated its position on the subject as reflected in the Final Document of the Conference, issued as document A/49/287 of 29 July 1994, the relevant paragraphs of which have been submitted to the Open-ended Working Group.

More recently, on 5 October 1994, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the non-aligned countries further considered the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and adopted a Communiqué. In this respect I wish to quote the relevant paragraphs of that Communiqué, as follows:

> "The Ministers and Heads of Delegation, having noted the report on the progress and work of the Open-ended Working Group on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council, reaffirmed their view that both the reform and expansion aspects of the Security Council, including its decision-making process and procedures, should be examined as integral parts of a common package, taking into account the principle of sovereign equality of States, criteria such as equitable geographical distribution, and the need for transparency, accountability and democratization. They expressed their concern that non-aligned countries were extremely under-represented in the Council and underlined that the proposed enlargement should, therefore, be comprehensive in nature so as to enhance the credibility of the Council and to reflect the universal character of the world body. In this context, the Ministers recalled the relevant decisions of the Jakarta Summit and urged that the non-aligned countries should work towards increasing their representation in the Security Council.
>
> "The Ministers and Heads of Delegation urged the Working Group to determine the extent and nature of expansion and its modalities. Any predetermined selection excluding the non-aligned and other developing countries would be unacceptable to the Movement. They stressed the importance, as proposed in the Cairo Ministerial Conference, of enhancing the effective and efficient functioning of the Security Council by adopting measures geared at reforming its working methods and procedures and improving the relationship of the Council with the General Assembly and non-permanent members of the Security Council. In this context, they decided that the Non-Aligned Movement address specific measures called for by the Cairo Ministerial Conference before the commencement of the next round of consultations of the Open-ended Working Group and reiterated their conviction that the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council should take priority action on these measures."

I have just presented the position of the non-aligned countries on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. To conclude, I wish to state that the non-aligned countries deem it essential for the Open-ended Working Group to continue its work in order to fulfil its mandate as contained in General Assembly resolution 48/26. We therefore support its recommendation, as indicated in paragraph 9 of its report, that it continue its work at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The non-aligned countries wish to reiterate their commitment to participate constructively in the deliberations of the Working Group on an increase of the membership of the Security Council in the firm conviction that an intensified dialogue on this issue will be in the broader interests of all Member States.

Mr. Kalpagé (Sri Lanka): Sri Lanka was one of the countries that in 1979 called for the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

During the forty-eighth session, the Open-ended Working Group set up to discuss the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council brought into focus a number of concerns relating to the Council. The discussions in the Working Group clearly indicated certain important considerations that need to be borne in mind during the forty-ninth session:

The increase in the membership of the United Nations and the extension of the Council into radically new areas of activity necessitate a review of the membership and other aspects of the Council's functioning: the wide participation in the Working Group's meetings is a clear indication of the keen interest of all Member States in this item; the rich exchange of views revealed varying perceptions on the complex issues before the Working Group; although reaching consensus on major issues was difficult, the discussions in the Working Group helped to identify positions of individual delegations and to assess the nature of the questions we face.

The report (A/48/47) submitted under this item was adopted by consensus in the Working Group. However, the report does not indicate the full range of the views expressed, and this in our view is a great pity.

In a sense, given the far-reaching import of the issues involved, it may not be surprising that consensus remained elusive on the major issues. We therefore welcome the fact that the Open-ended Working Group will continue to develop its work, taking into account the views that have already been expressed at the forty-eighth session.

As my delegation has already stated in the meetings of the Working Group, two major categories of proposals and suggestions emanated from the dialogues during the last session.

First, there are those reforms in the working methods of the Council that have been welcomed by all. These have led to a greater degree of openness and transparency in the work of the Council. We feel that many of the enlightened measures taken by the Council should be considered part of its regular working methods rather than as a reflection of the initiative or working "style" of individual Member States that presided over it. Sri Lanka is well aware that the Security Council still works on the basis of "provisional" rules of procedure and that formally setting down the recent reforms and institutionalizing them may not be easy. We would, however, have welcomed at least a statement from the Security Council noting — and blessing, if you will — the changes that have been welcomed by all members. We hope that the process will continue and that these changes will become a matter of course.

Secondly, there are those proposals relating to the increase in the membership of the Council that require amendment of the Charter. That the Council should increase its membership has been universally accepted. There are divergent views on the extent of the increase. Sri Lanka feels that a modest increase of up to a maximum of 25 would keep the Council within acceptable proportions for decisive action and yet provide a means of ensuring more equitable representation for the regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America, which are currently underrepresented in the Council.

The question of the number of permanent members in the Council has been much more controversial. Sri Lanka's own position has been that new realities — political, military, economic — as well as other factors which characterize the international scene today call for an adjustment in respect of the permanent members of the Council. It is necessary to consider seriously the eligibility of additional States, including non-aligned States, for permanent membership in the Council. A number of countries have been mentioned, discussed and advocated as qualifying for permanent membership in the Council in terms of the new international realities. Some of the arguments advanced in favour of those other countries are at least as cogent today as were the arguments considered valid when the present five permanent members were determined. The ultimate criterion should be the acceptability of a Member before the general membership.

Sri Lanka does not wish to anticipate discussions in the Working Group at this current session. However, we do feel that action should be taken in respect of those proposals that do not require amendment of the Charter. We believe that such changes, which have come to be called "soft options", have the following undeniable advantages: first, they will not be any impediment to the Council's present level of effectiveness, its speed or its efficiency of operations; secondly, they will indeed only serve to enhance the Council's credibility and representative character and give its decisions and actions greater, if not universal, acceptability; lastly, they will be major confidence-building measures that would help develop a healthy nexus between the Security Council and the general membership of the United Nations on whose behalf the Council must act in accordance with the Charter.

The standardization of these so-called soft options should not in any way imply that the more radical changes necessitating Charter amendment should be set aside or delayed. It is important to pursue action on both. However, where agreement is possible on the soft options, they should not be held hostage until such time as agreement has been reached on the more difficult, and indeed more vital, areas of Security Council reform which require amendment of the Charter.

In conclusion, I wish to thank Ambassador Samuel Insanally, President of the Assembly at its forty-eighth session, and the two Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, the Permanent Representative of Finland, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein, and the Permanent Representative of Singapore, Ambassador Chew Tai Soo, for the exemplary manner in which they guided the deliberations in the Working Group.

Sri Lanka looks forward to participating, under the President's guidance, in the Working Group this year during the forty-ninth session. We sincerely hope that it would then be possible to reach more definite agreement, which would make the Security Council more effective and more responsive to the general membership of the United Nations. This is essential at a time when the Organization is faced with new challenges.

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): At the outset, my delegation wishes to congratulate Ambassador Insanally, Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group, and the two Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of Singapore and Finland, for having effectively guided the Working Group in its initial rounds of deliberations.

The Philippine delegation believes the time has come for Member States to undertake a more detailed examination of the various issues relating to the expansion and reform of the Security Council. In this regard, delegations should be prepared to offer and consider specific proposals by the time the Open-ended Working Group reconvenes — we hope by early next year. Above all, we should attempt to translate, where possible, our general positions into detailed negotiating proposals.

Our fundamental view is that any enlargement of the Security Council should be firmly based on the principle of the sovereign equality of States, equitable geographical distribution and the need to create greater transparency, accountability and democratization. Furthermore, we believe the effectiveness and efficiency of an enlarged Council would not necessarily be inversely related to its size.

In fact, wider membership would lead to a more democratic decision-making process and, ultimately, to more active support for decisions, as well as participation in operations arising from such decisions. That is why, in our view, an expansion by four or five seats might not be fully consistent with these concerns.

Increasing the membership of the Council is also important in view of the growth in the membership of the Organization and of the extreme under-representation of developing countries in the Council. Failure to address this situation meaningfully would tend to undermine the credibility of the Council and the universal character of United Nations decision-making.

We therefore believe that the Working Group should begin to focus on specific proposals relating to the following matters: the total size of any increase; the size of any increase in existing categories; new categories, such as semi-permanent or quasi-permanent membership, or membership based on rotation, and the total membership in such categories; and criteria for possible new permanent members and/or membership in new categories. In connection with the last point, it should be stressed that the criteria for non-permanent members are already specified in Article 23(1) of the Charter. We should also examine in detail the responsibilities and privileges of members of the Council — particularly the use of the veto.

Moreover, it is fairly clear that these issues are interrelated. The Working Group should therefore decide on an appropriate arrangement for considering them simultaneously or as a package when necessary, bearing in mind the need for full transparency.

The "related matters" to which this agenda item on the Security Council refers are an equally important aspect of the item. In this regard, the Philippine delegation is anxious not to lose the momentum achieved in the Working Group, as reflected in the statements of a significant number of delegations, which generally cited an urgent need for the Security Council to adopt effective measures aimed at enhancing its relationship with the General Assembly, with other United Nations bodies and with the general membership. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has also proposed a set of measures on the other matters contained in its Cairo Declaration, which was adopted last June.

Member States should advance the work on the other matters by building upon and refining the various measures already proposed or the proposals circulated in the Working Group, which the Security Council could undertake in addition to those it has recently instituted. To facilitate this task, we reiterate our support for the establishment by the Open-ended Working Group of an informal drafting body to consider all proposals made in connection with improving the Council's decision-making processes and procedures.

My delegation further proposes that the Working Group examine, as a priority, proposals on the other matters in the context of two mutually reinforcing and interrelated categories of measures.

The first category would consist of measures aimed at improving the Security Council's working relationship and interaction with the General Assembly, with other bodies and with the non-members of the Council. These could include improved reports from the Council to the General Assembly, in line with General Assembly resolution 48/26; structured and more frequent consultations on United Nations peace-keeping operations between the Council and troop-contributing countries; and the creation by the Council of subsidiary organs — a matter referred to in Article 29 of the Charter.

The second category would include measures dealing with the Council's working methods and decision-making procedures: the holding of more frequent open meetings before the adoption of a particular resolution or decision of the Council; a written summary of proceedings in the informal consultations of the whole, to be made available to the general membership; and structured briefings on particularly urgent issues considered in the informal consultations of the whole, similar to those provided for the press corps.

The Philippine delegation hopes to contribute towards significant progress on this agenda item during the current session. We believe, however, that, in terms of the pace of work, both the expansion issues and the other matters — although these are obviously interrelated and mutually reinforcing — need not be strictly linked. The adoption of a more flexible approach in the consideration of these issues would facilitate the Working Group's ability to advance its work on the ones in respect of which there is a high degree of convergence or consensus. This would be done, of course, without prejudice to the work in the other areas. Ultimately, we believe, progress in one area would contribute to progress in others.

Mr. Graf zu Rantzau (Germany): We have come a long way since we discussed the agenda item "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" a year ago at the General Assembly's forty-eighth session. Through the creation of an informal Working Group it was possible to focus the discussion on the core of the problem and to provide all Member States with an opportunity to present their views. I want to express particular thanks to Ambassador Insanally, the Working Group's Chairman, and to his Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Breitenstein and Ambassador Chew, for the excellent work they have done.

We have now arrived at a point where the general exchange of views has run its course and an in-depth discussion of concrete reform proposals must begin. Statements made during the general debate of the forty-ninth session confirm this view. With regard to substance, the past year's discussion has brought about growing consensus among Member States on the central point with regard to this exercise — that the Security Council shall be enlarged.

Four key elements appear to be essential, plausible and necessary to any Security Council reform. First, all world regions should be equitably represented on the Security Council. In particular, the regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean need stronger representation. Secondly, countries that are able and willing to contribute on a global scale to the maintenance of peace and security and are already shouldering a large responsibility in respect of international development and United Nations activities should be permanently represented on the Council. Thirdly, the general membership of the United Nations should have the potential to be represented on the Council more often. Fourthly, the Security Council's work must be carried out in an open and transparent manner to enable non-members to receive all the information they require. Also, all Member States should have a better opportunity to provide input for the Council's work.

We therefore support an increase in the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council to allow both a better representation of the regions that are currently underrepresented and a more adequate representation of countries which shoulder a large share of the United Nations overall burden.

Germany would support proposals to create additional permanent seats for countries from the regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. As far as we are concerned, we have repeatedly made it clear in the past and we state again today that we are willing and prepared to shoulder the special responsibilities deriving from permanent membership. In this context, it appears essential to us that all permanent members have not only equal responsibilities but also equal rights.

Should agreement not be possible now with regard to permanent seats for countries from the regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, the following alternative could be considered.

To improve the possibilities of representation from the regions, paragraph 2 of Article 23 of the United Nations Charter should be amended to allow the re-election of Member States to the Security Council. At the same time, the number of non-permanent seats ought to be increased in favour of these regions. As a consequence, countries with the ability and willingness to contribute more than the average to United Nations activities and the maintenance of international peace and security could serve on the Council on a more frequent or even continuous basis. In order to enable the largest contributors to the United Nations system, which share global responsibilities and which, together with the United States, carry more than 50 per cent of all expenditures, to participate in the Council's work, two permanent seats should be added to the Security Council.

Proposals to introduce a third category of semi-permanent seats, would, in our view, not improve the chances for the large majority of Member States to serve more often on the Council. In addition, such a proposal would widen the gap between permanent and non--permanent members. It would marginalize the role and potential of a majority of the other countries to influence the Council's decisions. In the League of Nations, a system of several classes did not work. We cannot support such proposals. What is needed is not greater division but more homogeneity among the members of the Council.

We are pleased that a broad consensus on the need for a more open and transparent Security Council appears to have emerged. As a matter of fact, many steps have been taken already by the Security Council itself to provide Member States not currently represented on the Council with better access to information about the Council's proceedings. More improvements, such as consultation mechanisms with troop-contributing countries, are currently under discussion. My delegation understands and shares the frustration of non-members of the Security Council, which often feel uninformed about and locked out of Council decisions. We hope that the improvements made so far will be followed by additional steps to provide the general membership with sufficient information and insight in the Security Council's decision-making, thus allowing Member States to contribute their views and represent their interests *vis-à-vis* the Security Council.

We have been pleased with the progress made to date in the discussion of this agenda item. Now concrete proposals must be discussed so that agreement on a reform package which will serve the interests and the needs of the overwhelming majority of Member States can be reached. The Security Council's credibility and therefore its effectiveness depend on whether its composition is adapted to the new post-cold-war realities.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset, I should like once again to congratulate Mr. Essy on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly.

I would also be remiss in not taking this opportunity to commend the able and wise leadership of his predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, the Permanent Representative of Guyana, who led the Working Group in a very efficient manner.

I should also like to praise the sincere and constructive efforts of the members of the Bureau, the representatives of Finland and Singapore.

The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council is gaining further importance in the eyes of the international community. This is only natural and was to be expected in view of the rapid pace of changes and developments in the world today. Interaction and cohesion are required of the current international order in the face of such changes.

The contemporary world order has come a long way in laying the foundations of the fundamental concepts and principles of today's international relations. Those concepts and principles are irreversible no matter how times and circumstances may change. They constitute a valuable contribution that enriches humanity and promotes its development. Those new concepts and principles have become acquired rights which all countries and peoples cherish. International developments require us to review, periodically and sometimes comprehensively, certain aspects of the international order so that it may not become dated and outstripped by events. We should make sure that the international order truly reflects current international realities.

One of the most important sources of commitment to the Security Council's resolutions is the collective international will we know by the name of international legality. This the elementary simple idea that lies behind the new international order is exactly what we should enhance and reflect in the work of the Council and it should be the ultimate objective in any process of reforming and developing the work of the Council.

Strengthening the legality, which derives from the Charter, and which imparts to the Security Council's resolutions their legitimacy, requires in the view of my delegation: First, increasing membership of the Council. Such increase should accurately reflect the realities of today's world. Second, reviewing the Council's decision-making procedures so that the Council, as stipulated in the Charter, may genuinely act on behalf of all Member States. Third, defining the framework of the exercise of veto power so that it may not be abused, either explicitly or implicitly.

With regard to the expansion of Council membership, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his statement to the General Assembly on 30 September, referred to the parameters of Egypt's position, which may be summed up as follows: First, the increase in Council membership should be limited and should be on a regional and not on a country-specific basis. Second, the criteria stipulated by the Charter should be adhered to with regard to the addition of new members to the Council. Third, the increase should reflect very accurately and honestly the political weight of regional Powers from all regions of the world, and the seats allocated to each geographic region should be rotated among countries which meet the eligibility requirements.

In this regard, it is important to refer to a number of concrete proposals that were put forward during the general debate and others that have been put forward today, such as those by Egypt, Italy and Australia, among others. Those proposals could be discussed further, developed and elaborated.

With regard to the decision-making process in the Council, it is important to take into account the need to enlarge the scope of consultation so that it may include the countries concerned in the region affected by the Council's decision or resolution. In addition, troop-contributing countries to peace-keeping operations should be consulted, in accordance with Article 44 of the Charter. We must also strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the relevant regional organizations, in accordance with and in application of Article 52 of the Charter. Consultations should not be confined to the stage of decision-making, but should, rather, take place at an earlier stage, and continue thereafter, in order to take advantage of the expertise of regional Powers and organizations.

While on the subject of the shortcomings of the Council's work, we have to address the question of veto power in the Security Council and to mention that its frequent use in the past prevented the Security Council and, indeed, the United Nations as a whole, from properly shouldering their responsibilities. Some may claim that the veto power is rarely exercised nowadays. This may be true, but only in relation to the veto used in voting on draft resolutions. As for the threat to use the veto or what is known as the covert veto, this is frequently resorted to during the drafting and formulation of draft resolutions. So, the practice is with us and has not stopped.

No one can be sure that in the future the Organization will not find itself in tense circumstances similar to those that pertained in the past, circumstances that would once again render it unable to perform its functions and shoulder its responsibility. In dealing with the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council, it has thus become important to determine the scope of the use of veto power by agreeing on clear criteria for the framework of its use. In dealing with this subject it might be useful to go back to the San Francisco Conference and to review the numerous attempts made at the beginning of that Conference, later in the Security Council and then, for many years, in the General Assembly, to differentiate between substantive issues and procedural matters. All such attempts failed. The permanent members did not succeed in imposing their viewpoint. To this day, the framework within which the veto power may be used has eluded definition.

The Egyptian delegation considers that to arrive at such definition, and thereby to enable the Council to perform in a better fashion, we can do one of two things: we can either amend the Charter in such a way as to achieve the definition of the scope and limits of the veto, as the permanent members tried to do in San Francisco; or we can amend and update the Council's rules of procedure in a definitive manner, without need for amending the Charter, provided the rules included certain procedures relating to the continuity and better performance of the Council.

In this connection, I should say, by way of example, that we can consider four kinds of measures and procedures that could constitute exemptions from the framework of veto power: first, special procedures related to fact-finding activities that are needed for the Council to function properly; secondly, dispatching United Nations observers, at the request or with the consent of the host country, to monitor developments and inform the Council by submitting precise reports on the situation under discussion; thirdly, authorizing the Secretary-General to take charge of certain tasks, in accordance with Article 98 of the Charter, relating to the settlement of disputes, and rule 23 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure; and, fourthly, measures of a humanitarian nature, such as cease-fire resolutions, appeals to parties to cease hostilities and calls for respect for the Geneva Conventions. Such matters should not be subject to veto power.

The work of the Working Group, over the past year, has been limited to general statements and general expressions of opinion. There have been no working papers containing clear, specific ideas that could become a basis for negotiations. We should now move from the stage of general statements to a new stage of serious negotiations and open-mindedness in order for the Working Group to achieve tangible progress.

The objective we should strive to achieve in the future should be to reach consensus and thereby to reflect the will of the overwhelming majority of the members of the international community. It is not expected or acceptable that the viewpoint of the minority should be imposed upon the majority. The provisions of the Charter are crystal clear as far as the amendment is concerned; the approval of one-third of the membership of the United Nations is necessary. The two-thirds majority will not accept anything that runs counter to its vital interests. We have started work, in the Working Group, on the basis of consensus. The Egyptian delegation hope that this consensus will continue.

Mr. Chaturvedi (India): As a Member State which had the privilege of initiating the agenda item on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, India is happy to participate in today's debate. We are considering the item against the background of a full year of discussions in the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly under the able guidance of the President of the forty-eighth session and of the permanent representatives of Finland and Singapore. The Working Group had an extensive and intensive exchange of views on the issues related to the question, and the discussions gave us clear insight into the thinking of the States Members. I note that it is your intention, Mr. President, to lead the discussions of the Working Group in the coming year. We hope that in the next phase of the discussions we shall move on from exchange of ideas to consensus-building. Decisions on an issue as important as the structure, composition and functioning of the Security Council cannot be taken except by consensus.

The imperatives of expansion and reform of the working methods of the Security Council have been well recognized. Therefore, it is not necessary to go once again into the arguments, such as the changed realities of the world and the dramatic increase in the membership of the United Nations. In fact, the report of the Working Group states that

> "While there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged, there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion." *(A/48/47, para.8)*

As for the working methods and procedures, it was recognized that further measures were necessary to enhance transparency and to reflect the democratic aspirations of the vast majority of Member States. In January 1992, addressing the Security Council summit, the Prime Minister of India observed that

> "As the composition of the General Assembly has trebled since its inception, the size of the Security Council cannot remain constant any longer. Wider representation in the Security Council is a must, if it is to ensure its moral sanction and particular effectiveness."
> *(S/PV.3046, p. 97)*

The leader of the delegation of India to the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly spelled out our views on these subjects succinctly in his address to the General Assembly on 3 October 1994. In our view, it is imperative to expand the membership in permanent and non-permanent categories. Non-aligned and other developing countries must be included in the permanent member category to give them an opportunity to make their contribution to the working of the Council on a continuing basis. The number of non-permanent seats must also be increased to give Member States greater opportunity for participation in the work of the Council. As the eventual size of the Council will depend on agreement on the number of members to be added to each category, we remain flexible on this issue. We note, however, that in the Working Group there was near consensus on a figure in the middle twenties.

We often come across proposals that one country or another should be added to the permanent member category without going through a systematic process of selection on the basis of relevant criteria. We would advise against a selective, piecemeal expansion of the permanent member category. The laws of the corporate world, where equity shares determine voting power, should not apply to the Security Council, nor should we emulate the Bretton Woods institutions in which wealth determines the strength of the votes. Here at the United Nations, we believe in the principle of sovereign equality of nations. To maintain international peace and security, the Security Council should be representative of the international community as a whole, and its agenda should not vary from that of the general membership. Democracy and good governance are as good for the United Nations as for its Member States. The only prudent method we can follow, therefore, is to elaborate the set of criteria against which the claims of Member States for permanent membership should be judged.

In our view, these criteria should include population, size of economy, contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to peace-keeping and future potential. There may be others, but selection of a country should follow rather than precede the establishment of the criteria. The non-aligned Foreign Ministers representing the largest grouping of Member States at the United Nations agreed on this point when they recently declared any predetermined selection excluding the non-aligned and other developing countries unacceptable to the Movement. As stated by the leader of the Indian delegation, we are confident that India deserves to be a permanent member of the Security Council judged against any set of criteria. We stand ready to serve in that capacity whenever we are called upon to do so.

The general debate in the plenary this year has turned up a number of imaginative and innovative proposals for the expansion and reform of the Security Council. We shall study them and give them our full consideration as they come up for discussion in the Open-ended Working Group. But our basic approach is that the expansion should take place in the existing categories and on the basis of present geographical groupings. A radical reorganization of the Council, with new categories of members, or new geographical arrangements, will lead to more complications and retard the progress we have achieved so far. Such proposals may even require a comprehensive review of the Charter itself. The time has come for us to work out an expansion package within the framework that the Charter provides. Durability, resilience and expedience, rather than expediency, should determine the time frame for such an expansion.

My delegation would equally stress that the reform package we are considering should devote equal attention to expansion as to the improvement of the Council's working methods to enhance transparency. In addition to an integral and substantial reporting by the Council to the General Assembly, a regular system of exchange between the General Assembly and the Security Council through an appropriate mechanism is essential for reassuring the general membership of the accountability of the Council to the Assembly. The Council should also act in strict conformity with the provisions of the Charter and limit itself to the maintenance of international peace and security and not clutter its agenda with extraneous issues.

We greatly look forward to the commencement of discussions on the scope and nature of expansion of the Council, as well as on the measures necessary to improve its functioning, early in the year.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): The deliberations by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly have constituted an important initial step in the complex process of reforming the Security Council.

We are grateful to Mr. Samuel Insanally, who chaired that body, as well as to the Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Wilhelm Breitenstein and Mr. Chew Tai Soo, whose skilful steering allowed the Working Group to conduct its challenging task in a constructive way.

The report in document A/48/47 appears spartan in its content, but may prove eloquent in its understatement. In fact, in just nine paragraphs it encapsulates the proceedings of 22 intensely debated meetings and in one single paragraph, the eighth, it reflects the essence of the results of the exercise thus far. The core of that paragraph states that

> "While there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged, there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion." *(A/48/47, para. 8)*

The concision of that statement is compensated for by the depth of its significance. Here, for the first time, it is pointed out unequivocally that the membership of the Organization as a whole recognizes that the Security Council should be enlarged. It is no longer a matter of "whether or not", but rather of "how large and how soon".

Moreover, by agreeing to discuss further the scope and nature of such an enlargement, the Working Group has recognized that the objectives of the exercise concern not just the quantitative increase, but also the qualitative composition of that important organ.

Therefore, in its first year of deliberations, the Working Group succeeded in identifying and defining the main parameters of the question: first that the Security Council should be enlarged; and, secondly, that the enlargement should contemplate not only quantitative but also qualitative elements.

As recommended in the report of the Working Group, Brazil believes that the discussion of agenda item 33 should continue during this forty-ninth session, building on the work done at the forty-eighth session and on the views expressed at the current session. In response to this call, my delegation would like to present today some further views on this important issue as a contribution to further deliberations in the Working Group.

I will not dwell on the question of the need for the enlargement of the Council, since this is already a consensual view. What we must address in depth now are the subsequent twin questions of the scope and nature of the enlargement. From the deliberations of the Working Group there seems to emerge a general perception that the final determination of the size and composition of a restructured Security Council has to be predicated on three basic qualifications: equitable representation, effectiveness and efficiency.

Equitable representation stems from the idea that the membership of the Security Council should be adequately increased in order to make it more representative of the membership at large in view of present-day realities in international life. It is our belief that better representation will lead to a more democratic, as well as a more effective Security Council.

A balanced quantitative as well as qualitative expansion of the Council's composition should contemplate the following aspects. First, appropriate proportionality between the size of the Council and that of the entire membership of the Organization; secondly, concomitant increase of permanent as well as non-permanent seats in the Council; thirdly, adequate participation of both industrialized and developing countries in a future expansion of permanent members; fourthly, adequate presence of the international community in all its expressions, regional and otherwise; fifthly, due regard should be specially paid to the capability of members to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization; sixthly, appropriate arrangements should be made in order to allow better participation of medium-sized and small Member States in the Council.

Effectiveness and efficiency are two other critical qualifications required in the restructuring of the Council in order to improve its role in the discharge of its functions and powers.

Efficiency derives from the process of the Council taking action promptly, and its effectiveness relates to the Council's taking action that yields the intended results.

Therefore, due attention should be paid in order not to confuse or equate efficiency and effectiveness. A Security Council that expeditiously adopts dozens or more statements and resolutions in succession, the implementation of which remains largely ignored or unfulfilled, may be seen to be efficient, but would not be effective. Conversely, a single decision taken by the Council after lengthy and thorough deliberations with the participation of all the relevant parties could be very effective, while not necessarily qualifying as "prompt" action.

Another confusion that should be avoided is to automatically correlate the size of the Council with its efficiency. Even the most ideally efficient Council composed of one single member could be ineffective if that member lacked political will and adequate resources. In the same way, a Council composed of 10, 15, 20 or 30 members could, regardless of its size, be paralysed indefinitely by a single veto or threat of veto.

A larger Council could be made more effective if more members with appropriate political, diplomatic, financial, military, cultural or other relevant resources are called in to cooperate in the task of maintaining international peace and security. Equally, a larger Council could become more effective when it is perceived by the international community as being more equitably composed, and therefore more authoritative in its deliberations and decisions.

As I mentioned before, the efficiency of the Council is related to its process of decision-making, while its effectiveness is related to the achievement of the desired results in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is the considered view of my delegation that the increase in the efficiency of the Security is fundamentally linked to the perfecting of its working methods, whereas the effectiveness of the Council would substantially improve through a balanced, quantitative and qualitative expansion of its composition, which would endow it with more authority and more resources.

The relationship of the Security Council to the General Assembly, to other bodies and organizations and to non-members of the Security Council, on the one hand, and the reform by the Security Council of its working methods and procedures on the other constitute two topics that are fundamentally interlinked with the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. All of these are crucial aspects of our endeavours aimed at enhancing the legitimacy and the effectiveness of that main organ.

I should like to underscore the organic relationship between the Security Council as a whole and the membership at large of the United Nations, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter, in order to address the question of the accountability and transparency of the actions of the Security Council *vis-à-vis* the Members of the Organization.

Its accountability stems from the fact that, in acting on behalf of the Members of the United Nations, the Security Council must effectively respond to the expectations of the international community. Each member of the Council, permanent and non-permanent alike, is therefore accountable to the membership at large of the Organization for its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Likewise, transparency derives from the need for non-members of the Council to be able to follow and participate in, as appropriate, the discussion of any question of concern to them, as provided for in Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter. Accountability and transparency would thus contribute to enhancing the legitimacy and the effectiveness of a more equitably represented Security Council. In this regard, the delegation of Brazil has advocated some practical measures for improving the accountability and transparency of the Security Council.

As a small contribution in this regard, the delegation of Brazil took the initiative, during its presidency of the Security Council in October 1993, of introducing the report of that organ to the General Assembly. It is our expectation that this practice will be maintained and further improved in the future, with a view to establishing a more wide-ranging dialogue between these two main organs of the Organization.

The reporting system of the Security Council should be improved, both in form and in content, with a view to making the paperwork and the procedures of the Council less opaque and more user-friendly.

While concurring with the pertinent criticism that the reports of the Security Council make for arid reading and could be more analytical, we note that the document in its current format reports only on the official proceedings. The crux of the problem is that the contents of the informal consultations, by their very nature, are not recorded and thus cannot be formally reported. In this regard, mechanisms could be devised to preserve in some authoritative way the main contents of the informal consultations and to keep the interested public informed.

We deem it useful for the President of the Council to brief regularly the Chairmen of regional groups on the programme of work of the month. We also deem it helpful for the President to attend, whenever appropriate, meetings of the regional groups to brief them on matters of specific interest to them. Moreover, we believe that such practice could be further improved by another modality of briefing by the President at the end of his or her term, giving an assessment of the work accomplished by the Council during that President's tenure. Such briefings could be given to the membership at large in the form of a public informal meeting at the end of the month.

Similarly, we deem it appropriate that at the end of each informal consultation, the President of the Council, or a member of his or her delegation, give a succinct briefing of the deliberations to interested delegations. Alternatively, such a task could be performed by a spokesperson from the Secretariat, specifically designated for that purpose.

Likewise, as regards the participation of non-members in the discussions of the Council, we believe that there is room for improvement somewhere in between the exclusionary nature of informal consultations and the rigid formality of the public meetings. To this end, I should like to make the following suggestions.

First, there could be more frequent recourse to Article 29 of the Charter, establishing ad hoc subsidiary organs that could assist the Council by performing a monitoring or a mediation role for the peaceful settlement of specific disputes with the participation, as appropriate, of interested non-members. Such a mechanism would greatly contribute to re-establishing the pre-eminence of the diplomatic functions of the Council, which we regard as a priority task at this moment.

Secondly, a special committee of the Security Council could be established, as was suggested once by the delegation of New Zealand, with the function of providing political oversight of the peace-keeping operations and serving as a forum for consultation with troop-contributing Members not represented in the Council, as well as for liaison with, and briefings from, representatives of the Secretariat.

Thirdly, there could be more frequent recourse to the highly informal meetings in the so-called ""Diego Arria" format, in order to allow Council members to receive briefings and input on matters before the Council from the different parties to conflicts or from representatives of relevant regional organizations, as appropriate.

Fourthly, along the same lines, the sanctions committees could consider ways to better enable involuntarily affected Member States to bring to the attention of Council members the problems they face in implementing the sanctions adopted by the Security Council.

And, fifthly, the Security Council could also intensify its efforts to develop new channels and practices for an improved assessment of problems that arise from the implementation of sanctions regimes, with a view to giving a more concrete expression to the consultations under Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Many of these suggestions could be enshrined in a definitive version of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. Elements that could be the object of such a review and update might include, *inter alia*, clear provisions concerning the holding of formal meetings as well as informal consultations; provisions concerning the participation of non-members of the Council in informal consultations; more detailed provisions concerning subsidiary bodies such as commissions, committees or rapporteurs for specific questions; improved provisions concerning the publicity of meetings, circulation of documents and keeping of records, as appropriate; and provisions related to the use of the veto.

It is our belief that the final consensual result of the important process of ensuring equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council must reflect an adequate combination of all the elements I mentioned earlier that would be perceived as fair and equitable by the membership at large. Such a result would be fundamental for ensuring that the future Security Council we envisage will be efficient and effective as well as legitimate and authoritative, and, last but not least, representative.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.